

## AFTERTHOUGHTS

To begin with, if you haven't yet read the autobiography (*The Care and Feeding of Your Dragon*), you need to do that before continuing on here. This is just a space for me to muse about things AB (after the bio). Though I will probably wander all over the landscape, there will undoubtedly be references to chelas and the Brothers which you won't (most probably) understand without that background reading.

New thought: My dad wrote a very truncated biography—about 70 pages worth—that he left to anyone who wanted to read it. He gave me a copy, which I never read because I figured I knew all I needed to know about him already. I ran into it fifteen years after he died, and reading it was a kick. He told stories I had never heard, and I got a nice view of him as a young man. I don't know if what I'm writing here will have the same effect on you as his bit of writing had on me, but one can always hope.

*Entry 1:* (10/15/2025) As I pointed out in the autobiography, all chelas are good and extraordinary people, but not all good and extraordinary people are chelas. Good and extraordinary people are nevertheless to be honored, so there is a section later in this bit of whimsy that talks about some I have run into, even if only at a distance.

One of those individuals is Father Greg Boyle, the man who started Homeboy Industries. When he talks, there is a tone that rides on his words that is extraordinary. It is very easy to look at that man and think *chela unaware* (though who knows . . . ?).

Very few people are likely to read my autobiography. The book is a bit like Kay's meetings. Nobody is excluded from attending, but you need to know someone to know it exists. What got me thinking was that there will very likely be some who read the book and think, he (meaning me) was no Father Boyle, but I can see how Fletch *might* have had the experiences he writes about. Then again, there will most likely be others who read the book and think, "Really?"

If that's you, know that you are not alone. I know my demeanor during my life has not been anywhere close to saintly. I do seem to have a very strong inner devotion to others, whether that be obvious or not, and I have no idea what choices led me to becoming one of the Walkers in ancient times, but that notwithstanding, my inner life this time around has occasionally been, as one of the Brothers put it, *bloody*. If anything, assuming you believe my story, it will reinforce the notion that you really don't know what's going on underneath the surface with someone, even if that someone seems a bit curmudgeonly.

*Entry 2:* I'm semi-retired as of a year ago. I didn't go fully retired because Volume 2 hadn't yet been completed, I needed the tools the school provided for free (Photoshop, Dream Weaver, InDesign, Word, PowerPoint, etc.) and I needed continued access to Poly's Tech department.

In my first year of semi-retirement, I kept connected to the school by building demos for the physics department in the school's wood shop, having Senior Advisees for the year, and teaching a second-semester elective (Cosmology, Astronomy and Relativity). This year, I don't have advisees but will again teach the Cosmology, Astronomy and Relativity class second semester. I have additionally built more demos/labs (see photos).

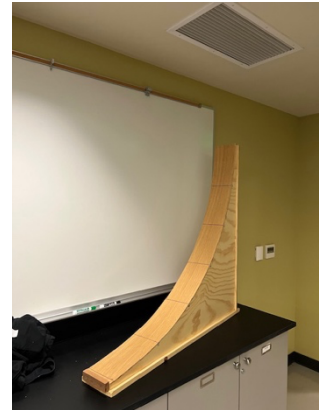
The first photo is of a curved incline I made for a *work lab* (where the word "work" is meant in the physics sense). The question posed was, "How much *work* would you do in raising a cart one vertical meter without acceleration (that is, with constant velocity) using a semi-circular, curved incline?"

What makes the set-up unique is that the required force varies as you move up the incline. That means the theory requires a *work* derivation that uses *an integral*, which students need to become comfortable dealing with. Very cool.

The second photo shows an inverted, curved incline (if you look, you will notice it is just the part of the curved incline that was left over after I made the curved cut seen in the first photo). The original problem was, "If you were sitting on top of a frictionless ice dome, and if a wisp of wind gave you the slightest of pushes, off-setting you from the top and motivating you to begin to accelerate down that curved surface, at what angle would you leave the dome?"

My creation was clearly not an ice dome, but it would act like one if you put a cart at the top and gave it a slight nudge. Doing the math predicts the cart should leave at  $48^\circ$ s with the vertical. Actually doing the demo shows that, indeed, the cart leaves right around  $48^\circ$ s. Again, very cool.

My point? I've been keeping myself busy by doing "stuff."



*Entry 3:* (11/05/2025) We normal humans do everything we can to fill up the time we have. During my "most productive years" in a professional sense, it meant having a job I loved that I could pour my attention into, and it meant writing the autobiography. This year I will teach a *Cosmology, Astronomy and Relativity* class second semester, but once that is over, I'll have no further contact with Poly. As I've had very little to do during the first semester of this year, I'm getting inklings of what life might be like when I'm completely retired (just one more instance where karma has let me see how others live—what to do after retirement is a big deal and something lots of people have trouble dealing with). Given my current state of mind, it is looking very empty . . . which got me thinking about where I should be going in a cosmic sense. Life is a privilege not to be squandered, so what SHOULD I be doing with myself. More to the point, what would a chela do?

When I take walks, I sometimes go into a semi-meditative state if I have things on my mind.<sup>1</sup> Lately, this *dearth of things to do* problem has been a part of my meditations. I

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<sup>1</sup> Small side trip: During Winter Break of the first year I was at Poly, I was up on Lake Ave in a shop, trying to figure out what I was going to get my dad for Christmas. Being completely enveloped in thought in one of those

mentioned in the autobiography that meditation has the potential of taking you places you aren't expecting. Yesterday was a good example.

Everything started with me thinking about all that free time whereupon I switched gears in that inexplicable way that can happen in meditation, and I began thinking about my time in Italy with Kay and Cathy and Brent and Cathy's brother Peter and Cathy's daughter Alex years ago. On that trip, it was not uncommon for one of the Brothers to talk to us about the area we were passing through. I don't remember what brought it up, but during one of those conversations, we were told that the nature kingdoms (the devas and elementals) were under tremendous stress and pressure as they attempted to hold to form. I had no idea what the Brothers were talking about as the idea of Global Warming and climate change was just a whisper in the zeitgeist at the time (it was the early 80's, and what most people were worrying about was the likelihood of a nuclear war with Russia). It wasn't yet obvious (at least to me) how humankind's self-involvement over the last several hundred years had and was affected our planet and the Consciousnesses that animate it.

One of the other things that happened during the trip was that one of the sybils (these were evidently devic Beings who could tell the future) came and said that the oracles had receded due to the times (this receding started several hundred years after Christ), but there would come a time when they would come again.

The significance of this in my little meditation was that I began to think about how patient the devic world is, and how it doesn't live in terms of moments like you and me but rather in terms of eons. Imagine living in a world where a thousand years is considered an instant. . . and I'm fretting about having a few years at the end of my life with nothing to do . . .

*Entry 4:* Still thinking about the problem outlined in Entry 3, my next walk found me thinking about still another thing the Brothers told us. When the Brothers look at humanity through the inner worlds, it is like looking into a dark valley filled with tiny lights. These lights are the Beings of humanity, and the brilliance of each light has to do with where that individual is in a spiritual sense. When they find a light that is particularly bright, they look more closely.<sup>2</sup>

I've been doing a morning meditation before getting out of bed every day. During it, I address "my brothers and sister" with the thought, "May you shine as brightly as you can." The shining I am referring to is the shining the Brothers perceive in that valley, and the blessing is the hope that people will act in as benevolent way as they can.

In an odd way, I think at least some of what chelas do is to work to help people "shine as brightly as they can." This, especially for people who are in despair and not seemingly loveable. This may be what I am supposed to learn to do, because at this point, I am woefully inefficient at it.

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meditative states I mentioned, I must have looked downright druggie. Dawn Cobb, who was the Registrar at Poly at the time, happened to see me in the store. It was a bit of a surprise when I heard her voice saying, "Craig, are you OK?" That was my first inkling that flowing into thought in a completely immersive way is not something one ought to do in public.

<sup>2</sup> I assume this is obvious, but that light is not something you can see with the naked eye. As it is a measure of the kind of Being you have become. Seeing it takes *inner sight*. This also reminds me of one of the Brothers' quotes I wrote out in Volume 1 of the autobiography. It went: "*It was given to the eye to have Light to see,*" says an old book. "*And even though you may be blind, you can see if you have the Light. But if you have not the Light and do not believe it is there, then you see only bits and pieces of the wonders and the beauties of the universe. And you will illumine nothing inside yourself or outside either.*"

*Entry 5:* At one point during the inner meetings with Kay and the Brothers, one of them said an odd thing. He said, “If you think about God (the One Self) just once a day, that will be enough.” I was at the time thoroughly involved in trying to live a chela life (or, at least, a lay-chela life), so I couldn’t really see why he would say something like that. What I didn’t realize was that after Kay was gone and our outward contact with the Brothers was no more, how I lived my life would be completely up to me. It was possible that I might become so involved in my own little bubble of a world, I might forget the whole. This was a way to stay connected.

I’m mentioning this because for the last year, I’ve been doing this little meditation every morning before I get up. I start with taking a breath in through my nose. As the air is being drawn in, I visualize the air molecules and the energies that ride on them. I greet them, then give gratitude for all they do for me (you can’t live for more than four or so minutes without air—the air you breath literally gives the body life). With that, I exhale sending gratitude out into the world with the act. I do this three times.

Once done, I give gratitude to Morya and KH for their presence, for all they do, for who they are and for the time they spent with our group. I then do the same for the Brotherhood as a whole. Next, for “my brothers and sisters,” I send out the hope that they *shine as brightly as they can* (this is me thinking about that inner world *valley of lights* mentioned by the Brothers). I then give greeting and gratitude to the devic and elemental kingdoms, to the great Being that animates mother earth and gives me a place to be and experience and learn and grow, to the even greater Being at the center of the energy-producing “father” of our system (our star) that gives us light. Next, I project my thought in gratitude toward the Divine Mind (God) that created this wondrous universe of which I am a tiny speck, and to the High Mind within that is my parent, and to all that supports me (my body included). It takes about two minutes when I’m focused. I do it every morning before I get up.<sup>3</sup>

I started doing all of this naturally. It just seemed right. But the other day while I was walking, it struck me that I was doing exactly what the Brothers had suggested so many years ago. I was *remembering God once a day*.

*Entry 6:* I spent a lot of time in the autobiography talking about the Dark Brothers, and looking at actions being taken by people in our world today who are animating what I think the Dark Brothers support. Often, the Beings who move in this direction are sad souls who have probably had many lives in which they have been unsatisfied with their lot in life, and who have finally come into a situation here they can force their way on the world (I’m thinking of Russell Voigt, Director of the Office of Management and Budget, who has inflicted so much pain and suffering on federal workers over the last several months, or his patron, Donald Trump in the seat of the president, making it all possible<sup>4</sup>). I did take a little time to talk about people who were acting in ways of light, but not as much as I should have. What I’m going to try to do here is talk about some of those individuals. I don’t know if these are chelas or just “good people.” After all, you never really know what is underneath the surface with folks.<sup>5</sup> There are, I’m sure,

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<sup>3</sup> I have of late also gone through the tonal patterns associated with the chakras (I talked about this in the autobiography), then pulled my auric shield up around me for safety.

<sup>4</sup> I have wondered recently why nobody has accused President Trump of being a Russian agent. Talk about a plum job for a Russian mole, President of the country you dearly want to destroy. Then I realize that what is going on with Trump is a whole lot bigger than that.

<sup>5</sup> I remember a story told by one of the Brothers about a supposed holy man who lived “just down the road” from the Teacher’s ashram. The man was not very bright and in his early years realized that every time he spoke he

many people who are very benevolent and selfless in some area of their life, and not so much in others, and there is always the problem of people having hidden karmic knots they will have to attend to down the line (hence the observation that chelas are good people, but not all good people are chelas). None of that is really important here. I just want to highlight a few of the individuals I've learned about whose actions are outstanding from a human perspective.

The first of these is Ada Limon. On October 6, 2025, Tonya Mosley, host of PBS's *Fresh Air*, interviewed Ada Limon, 24<sup>th</sup> Poet Laureate of the United States. Although you can never really know what is going on underneath the surface, listening to her made me think about what it might be like to be a chela unaware in today's world. In the middle of her poem *Startlement*, she wrote, "If you sit by a riverside, you see a culmination of all things upstream. We know now we were never at the circle's center. Instead, all around us, something is living or trying to live." A little later in the interview, when asked about "our times," she said that with all the violence and horror (she is Latina in Trump's world), "we can't lose our tenderness, we can't lose our softness . . . it is important to love." I had the impression that this was a very fine human being.

The second is Yvon Chouinard, founder of the apparel brand Patagonia. In 2022, he gave away his company to the Holdfast Collection, a group of non-profit "entities" who give out grants to organizations that are focused on fighting climate change (the Nature Conservancy, for instance, was given 5.2 million dollars to buy 8000 acres in the Mobile-Tensaw Delta to protect the delicate waterway). At this point, ALL OF THE PROFITS from Patagonia go toward those grants. In other words, this guy turned a for-profit company that was making a billion dollar a year into the biggest philanthropic entity focused on the environment in the world. In its first year of operation, the Holdfast Collection managed to help protect 162,710 acres of wilderness around the world. But Chouinard was active even before the turn-over. He and a man named Doug Thompkins (founder of the clothing company Esprit) bought up enormous swaths of Argentina and Chile, helping fund the creation of a series of national parks. In Chile, the parks extend up and down the coast, creating a corridor for animals to range freely. Again, this seems like the actions of a very fine, thoughtful human being.

Third: We Americans don't have to worry about living in cooking-stove produced, smoke-filled houses, because we have access to relatively efficient stove and fan systems in our homes. That is not the case in third world countries. Charlot Magayi, living in the slums of Nairobi, invented a cooking stove that reduces air pollution by 90%. Selling them for \$10, she has installed over 600,000 of them in households. Along with making the air quality in homes much better, it is estimated that the stoves have sequestered somewhere around 930,000 metric tons of carbon that otherwise would have reached the atmosphere. She has also produced a mosquito-repellent cooking-fuel that not only smokes less, it repels mosquitoes. She seems to be a fine individual who saw a problem and worked to solve it. (I came across her in the November, 2025 edition of *Time* magazine—Volume 206.)

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ended up looking foolish. His remedy was to take a vow of silence. He held that vow for the rest of his life. What was amusing was that in his old age, he became revered by many because it was believed his silence was the consequence of deep wisdom. This was not a true, wise, holy man, but *people* had no idea . . .

Fourth: Mitch Albom is a sportswriter, radio host and author based in Detroit (among other books, he wrote *Tuesday's With Morrie*). In 2010, he was contacted by an 84-year-old reverend who ran an orphanage in Haiti. That year there had been a devastating earthquake in the area, and the reverend was hoping that Albom could help him find out what had happened to his orphans (there was no cell phone service and commercial flights into the country had all be canceled). Albom made some calls and got a small private plane that took him and the reverend into the country. They found the orphans, who were desperately poor and lucky to have a bit of rice for food in a day, but who seemed remarkably happy in their lives. It changed him. He has since supported that orphanage wholeheartedly, adopting one child who, after two years, died of (as I remember) cancer, then adopting another baby who was no less a wonderful child. As he said in the *Fresh Air* interview, *how can you look into the eyes of a suffering child and not want to help?* Again, another seemingly worthwhile human being.

Fifth: My mom took me to my very first of Kay's meetings. At some point, whoever was speaking said *humanity owes a huge karmic debt to our younger brothers*. I don't remember what-all they said beyond that, but that one phrase was powerful enough to motivate me to stop eating meat. In fact, the next night, as I was thinking about what to have for dinner, my mom was surprised to hear me say that meat was obviously out, given what the Brothers had said (interestingly, mom heard the same talk and it did nothing to motivate her to stop eating meat—this was nothing against her, it was just that our karmic pasts and path were different). Aside from the humanity of treating our younger brothers with love and respect, it wasn't until much later that I found out that I had been a Franciscan monk (St. Francis was known to have preached to the birds) who was very much devoted to our younger brothers.

I don't go to dog pounds because I know that looking into the eyes of those frightened Beings, Beings that so want to be loved, I wouldn't be able to handle the emotional tearing I would feel not being able to take all of them home with me. I would also have trouble extending the lovingness I would normally extent to Beings at this level because I would know that, allowing them to attach themselves to the energies I might project at them, I would then have to leave them (abandonment is a major factor in many animals' lives). So you can imagine how I felt when I read the December, 2025 edition of *The Smithsonian* about an animal rescue organization called *Best Friends Animal Society*.

Located outside Kanab, Utah, it was started in 1982 by a now defunct religious group. Members of the church were devoted to "getting in touch with the angels in their life," and one arm of the church was dedicated to rescuing animal. As best I can tell from the article, this was headed by a man named Francis Battista. *Best Friends* became the outgrowth of that group. It is now the largest animal sanctuary and rescue operation in the country. It has 300 employees, 6000 volunteers and 40,000 visitors a year, many of whom stay weeks just to be with and support the animals. The complex, which is in Utah, covers 6000 acres and houses around 1600 animals. Their plan was and is to take in animals that have *run out of chances and would otherwise be killed* (according to the Humane Society of America, something like 13 million animals *are* "euthanized," which is to say "killed," every year). They have dogs, cats, horses, pigs, bunnies and birds. According to the Smithsonian article, every animal gets medical and

emotional care, hopefully becoming healthy enough to be taken in by a private home (adopted). Animals that can't get there live their life out on the ranch.

In other words, someone out there has done exactly what I have wanted to do ever since my time with the Brothers (I wouldn't be surprised to find that this place was manned by a bunch of reincarnated Franciscan monks). This may be a place I have to visit.

Sixth: I just saw a story by Giselle Fernandez of LA Story (Spectrum News) where she interviewed Father Greg Boyle. I talked about him in the autobiography. He is the parish priest who found himself ministering in one of the poorest, most gang ridden areas of L.A.

Part of what makes Father Boyle remarkable is the kindness and calm that rides on his voice. Much like Mother Teresa of Calcutta, he found himself in a situation in which human Beings were desperate, and he found a way to make things better. Schools wouldn't take in the homeboys (after being thrown out), so he took the ones who wanted to return to school and gave them a school to go to. Gang members who wanted to quit gangbanging but had tattoos all over their body and face, he created a tattoo-removal service. Ex-gang members who couldn't find a job because of who they were? He organized work and maintenance groups that worked all over L.A., then he created job centers for training and employment (currently there are fourteen of these, including Homeboy Bakeries, Homegirl Cafe, Homegirl Catering, Homeboy Silk Screening and Embroidery, Homeboy Merchandise, Homeboy Electronics Recycling, Homeboy Diner, Homeboy Grocery, Homeboy Farmers Markets, Homeboy Threads—this is focused on apparel and textile reuse, Homeboy Media and Talent, and Homeboy Puppy Fades & Dog Grooming). Father Boyle's overriding message is, "We stand with you. We will not abandon you. We want to see people as God does, with the greatest reverence."

In the interview, he had some interesting observations about our times. He said, "We have leaders who think compassion and kindness is weakness, but that's because they are not whole and healthy. No healthy adult thinks that tenderness and compassion is weakness. Kindness is the only thing that actually changes hearts.

"We are not trying to create a community of behaving people. We are creating a community of cherished belonging. If people don't transform their own trauma, they are going to transmit it, and keep doing that.

"Jesus took four things seriously. Inclusion, non-violence, unconditional loving kindness, compassionate acceptance. The current administration is, at the moment, about exclusion. How do we keep people out. It advocates violence at every turn, and has language and rhetoric that is entirely violent. It's about conditions on our love, as opposed to how our God sees loving unconditionally. And it's about rejection of people from trans to the immigrant population. None of this can be reconciled.

"God protects me from nothing, but sustains me in everything. So the sustenance I've always felt."

About ICE: "This is about the sanctity of family being split up. Fathers who won't return home, or mothers never seeing their children again. No one can align the energies of God with mass deportations.

"At Home Boy we have two overriding principles that we embrace. One is that *everybody is unshakably good, no exceptions*, and *we belong to one another, no exceptions*.

“A healthy person is a trusting person. A healthy person doesn’t call people names. A healthy person is kind. There is no difference between holiness and healthy. Healthy people love. Holy people love. It’s the same thing.

“Loving is your true self. Loving is your true home. Once you know that, you are never homesick, ever.

“My message to the world (her question)? Locking arms. We are in this together. We are in solidarity with the folks on the margins and the poor and the powerless and the voiceless. We are going to stand with the demonized until the demonizing stops, and with the disposable until the day comes when we stop throwing people away. This is an unstoppable movement because the movement is good and true and right and just, and because it is, you can lock arms feeling good about it. Is this political? Not even a little bit. This is gospel. This is the God of love. This is aligning our hearts with the energies of God. Is there any doubt? No, there is no doubt about this.”

Seventh: This is about a little different group of people. I was listening to the radio the other day, and the woman being interviewed had spent the last ten years of her life taking care of her Parkinson’s inflicted mother. She said the care didn’t become 24/7 until the last four years of her mother’s life, but that what the experience did was kill out any chance of the woman having a life outside the confines of her mother’s room. She had to stop working, so any chance of a pension or retirement flew out the window. She had no social life, and although she did have a supportive husband, she was the one who was changing her mother’s sheets, often soiled, by herself with her mother still in the bed. When she would get up in the morning, she would go into her mother’s room to wake her up with a smile. She would tell her she loved her, then get her ready to have breakfast. She would make the breakfast and serve it, but because her mother had lost all motor function, she would have to feed her. She would wash her and exercise her so her muscles would not atrophy completely. She would spend time with her during the day, more or less doing whatever was needed to make her mom’s life good. She would be completely exhausted at the end of the day, but she needed to be careful her mom didn’t know that. She would go to bed at night, get ten hours of sleep (assuming her mom didn’t wake up in the middle of the night with some need), then get up the next morning to do it all over again. It was a total devotion to the taking care of this person she loved, but who was completely unable to take care of herself. She would work for her mother endlessly.

There are, according to the show, one-in-four Americans who are either taking care of an infirmed loved one or have a relative who is taking care of an infirmed loved one. The U.S. has no federal program to aid in that effort, so it is up to the families to figure things out.

You often hear about the dedication of Zen monks to “sit” for forty minutes in meditation, maybe six times a day, and if you have ever tried it you will know it is not easy to do, but the discipline these family members animating is WAY beyond that. It is an amazing thing they do, and it has to go a long way to make their Being *shine*.

Eighth: I first heard these two speak on NPR, but most of what I’m about to quote came from a TED talk they did together

([https://www.ted.com/talks/aziz\\_abu\\_sarah\\_and\\_maoz\\_inon\\_a\\_palestinian\\_and\\_an\\_israeli\\_face\\_to\\_face](https://www.ted.com/talks/aziz_abu_sarah_and_maoz_inon_a_palestinian_and_an_israeli_face_to_face)). Maoz Inon is an Israeli whose parents were burned to death by Hamas during its

October 7 attack on Israel. In his grief, he and his family made a decision. They would not seek vengeance, they would seek peace and reconciliation (he had a dream that helped inform this). He publicly said that he was not only crying for his parents, but for the people in Gaza who were also losing their lives.

Aziz Abu Sarah's nineteen-year-old brother died after being detained and tortured by Israeli soldiers for throwing rocks. Aziz was only ten when it happened, and afterward he was angry and bitter and wanted vengeance. He saw no other choice. Eight years later when he studied Hebrew with Jewish immigrants, he came to see them as human beings and realized he did have a choice—he came to see them as *allies*. He said, “When I choose to be vengeful and hateful, I am being a slave to the men who killed my brother.” Of the war, he said, “It has been a nightmare. My friend, Abdelrahim, lost 50 members of his family including all of his children. What was amazing was that he was just like Maoz. He was still as committed to peace as he was before.”

During the TED talk, the question arose: “How do you make such a choice in the midst of so much tragedy?” Maoz said, “It is my parent’s legacy. They taught me what to say and how to act if they be killed.”

Note: I am a little irritated with myself because Maoz, during the lead-up to the NPR piece, said something that was very powerful . . . and I didn’t write it down (I hoped it would be a part of the TED talk). I am not going to be doing what he said justice, but I’m going to take a shot at recounting his words. They were something like: *I reject revenge because following that path leads only to a downward spiral into the teeth of agony.*

I REALLY wish I had gotten it the way he said it, but that was the idea.

As a note: I have no idea whether these men are chelas or are just very good and thoughtful individuals, but I do know there are chelas working in the middle east. They will never identify themselves as such, but they are there.

*Entry 7:* (12/08/2025) It's a never-ending wonder how karma steps in to make things happen when the time is right and the need exists. I've had a serious go-around with Volume 2 of the autobiography. The cover picture was not perfectly centered on the copy they sent me, which meant I needed to move the graphics over just a bit to compensate. There were little changes I decided to do (I added a picture; I made some of the lab covers darker and more easily read, etc.), but when I went to make the final pdf in InDesign, I got an error message I didn't understand. It took several days and a lot of fiddling to get things taken care of. In short, a lot went wrong that, in my opinion at the time, wasted time, and I could see no good reason for any of it aside from testing my patience.

A few days after the fiasco began, I wrote an email to Adrian (Adrian was Bev's brother—I talked about Bev in the autobio). In it, I mentioned something about Kay's cats. When I read it to Cathy, she pointed out that Kay's cat, Nebi, was indeed found on the steps of *the Nabi-Daniel mosque*, but that mosque was not located in Cairo, Egypt, as I said (and believed), it was and is located IN ALEXANDRIA.

With that revelation, I realized I had a huge problem. I had claimed in the book that the stones from the Great Pyramid had gone into building the Nabi-Daniel mosque *in Cairo*. A little research highlighted that the mosque in Cairo that had the Great Pyramid's stone in it was the

*Sultan Hassan Mosque.* In other words, I had all sorts of corrections to make in Volume 2, all of which needed to be made before making that final pdf.

If I had been able to quickly do all the original corrections to the cover and content, and if I hadn't run into the error message that slowed me down by several days, I'd have finished the book and uploaded everything without that crucial Nabi-Daniel correction. The roadblocks, in other words, gave my small self time for everything to sift out appropriately. Karma's hindrances had given me a giftie, the time needed to get all my ducks in a row. So again, I am in constant wonder at the way karma works.

*Entry 8:* (12/10/2025) I have been thinking a lot about sunlight lately. During the winter as the sun comes up over my backyard fence, sunlight streams into my bedroom. I am a normal guy in the sense that I have no unusual, mental, inner world powers. But I do go through a short meditation based on gratitude when I awaken in the morning, and it often ends just as the sun comes streaming into my room. When it does, I can feel its power; I can feel that that light is a very special thing. It is no wonder that first light from the rising sun is what awakens high chelas out of their meditations at the winter solstice.

I talk about the sun as being the embodiment of an immense Consciousness in the E.Phil book. What I said there was:

Many ancient peoples believed that the Sun was a great Being. Modern science naturally scoffs at such primitive ideas. After all, we know a lot about the Sun's composition and the fusion process that allows it to provide our world with energy, just as we know a lot about the physical body you and I inhabit. But does it make sense to automatically assume there is no Consciousness at the heart of that body (or ours, for that matter)?

We can answer that by answering another question: If a Being were given the task of overseeing and nurturing the development of an entire evolution of "lesser" Beings—Beings like you and me (not to mention the myriad of living forms that don't happen to be human)—would one expect that Being to embody a physical form that was man-like?

The answer to that is surely *no*. Our body-type is excellent for the kind of experiences we seem to be learning to deal with here on Earth, but for a higher Being with truly cosmic responsibilities, human form would surely be too limiting.

Put in an altogether different context, a very ancient context, if there is a purpose to life—if there is a God or Divine Mind or whatever—and if there is a spiritual evolution going on in the universe in general and our solar system in particular, would you not expect to find a guardian at the center of that evolution—a nurturing, supporting Being that was One with that infinitely loving, creative, always expanding Consciousness we call God?

And when that great, benevolent Being took up physical embodiment, one that would allow It to bathe Its charges in the Light of Its presence, what kind of a form might It take?

As an ancient Egyptian-inspired poem suggests:

*Even as the Sun, the eternal, shines forever,*

*From His Light grow the worlds;  
So the lighted soul reflects that mighty One,  
Whose Light shall create and renew the lives of men.*

Without our star, we would not be here. Neither would our planet, nor any of the others. Our world and our presence exists by the grace of our star. It upholds us completely.

Are stars the embodiment of Beings far beyond anything man could imagine? Who can say? But you can see why many in the ancient world might have thought so. And if they were right, what a wonder the night sky reveals . . . all those stars . . . all that Consciousness. How immense the mind of God.

*Entry 9:* (12/11/2025) I haven't exactly been brooding over this, but I am somewhat aware of my past and have spent some time lately thinking about my future. It was several thousand years ago that Kay and I and our group had our time together in Egypt in close proximity to the Brothers as *the Walkers*. After that life, I had a few lifetimes with Kay, but on the whole the next few thousand years had very little contact with the Brothers. That is not to say there may not have been a connection underneath the surface, but everyday life was pretty much devoid of my awareness of their presence.

Our group was again fortunate enough to have fairly close contact with the Brothers this time around, but when I step across the line at the end of this life, will that be it for another several thousand years?

What is interesting is that I may be missing the point.

Yesterday was cloudy. There was no sunlight on my face as I did my morning meditation. Today, the sunlight was brilliant. What came to mind as I noticed this juxtaposition was that you use light to illuminate your world *when you have it*. I know stuff now in this life. I need to move as far as I can with that knowledge. That doesn't mean having lives with no knowledge is bad (or won't happen), it just means I need to take advantage of what I have in the here and now, and not worry about what life will be like later on. I need to be as together as I can be *while I have light to guide me*, and I need to do it not because doing so will take me somewhere desired next time around but because that is what I *should* be doing right now, to act for the whole of life without thought of recompense. That is, after all, the first rule of chelthood.

To that end, I have noticed a strong disinclination to cut slack for people who rub me the wrong way. This has not necessarily been bad. Friction lets one see where there are resonances in the self that need to be looked at. Still, when I see the Pam Bondis of the world with their arrogant, belligerent, insufferable *I have all the power and you can go fuck yourself* attitude, I bristle. So how to deal with that?

First, as I said above, I know that when I react to things she says, it means there are qualities in me that are resonating with her aggressiveness, and that I have to identify and deal with. On a secondary level, though, there is the chela consideration. Gulnar, a chela who lived in Egypt, once said to us, "Never do anything that might support the Dark Side." So how to look at a Pam Bondi?

When the Brothers were asked how the Great Meditator in Egypt (the one who gathers up all the best of the thoughtforms you and I generate, and concentrates them so they will not be swamped by the negative side) how that great Being views members of the Dark Side, they said

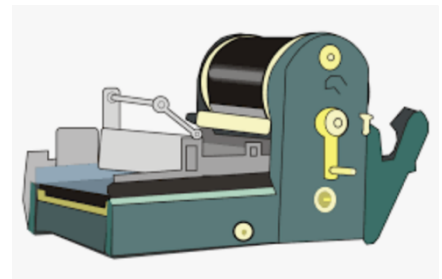
he looks at them as Beings who have simply lost their way. At another time, the Brothers told us that when it comes to Beings who were failing in a spiritual sense, they were the Beings we should give the most love to, because they are the ones who need it the most.

So that's what I've been trying to do. When I see Bondi on television, I look at her as one of my own who has gone astray. And although I can see all the pain and harm her actions are doing, I try very hard to remember that she is one of my clan (being another human Being) and, as such, her failure is a partial failure of the clan.

There is one other side to all of this, though, that is interesting if you are fascinated (as I am) about the dynamics underneath the surface.

*Thought* is a very real thing. Projected through speech, it carries a force that can stab into the auric complex of an individual being verbally attacked.<sup>6</sup> My auric complex isn't as strong as it should be (remember the dream about being in my house with doors that wouldn't lock . . . the symbolism being that I was way too easily swamped by whatever might impinge upon me from the inner level). So when the Bondis of the world use words to slice into supposed adversaries, the effect is very real because in an inner-level way, the attack is actually working to cut into the self. Being mindful of the sadness of that Being (in a cosmic sense) helps blunt the attack, but it is not a natural thing to do (at least not for me). For me, it needs to become a more natural thing to do. One step followed by another . . .

*Entry 10:* (1/08/2026) I woke up this morning and began to muse about all the things you might expect to find in an autobiography (cultural references?) that aren't in mine. For instance, when I first began to work in education, if you wanted to give a handout to students, you had to use what was called a mimeograph machine to make the copies. To do that, you would handwrite or type onto special paper called stencils whatever it was that you wanted to disseminate. You would then go to the mimeograph room where you would find the machine (see sketch). You would check to see if the machine had fluid, then you would attach the stencil to the drum. Once attached, you would turn the drum by hand using the hand crank, and as the drum and stencil went round and round, sheets of paper would feed through from a feeder tray and the image on the stencil would be imprint on the sheets. If you had forty kids in your class (not an unusual number for public schools at the time) and wanted to give each kid one sheet, you cranked the drum forty times making one copy per turn. If there were three pages in your packet, you did this process three times (120 cranks).



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<sup>6</sup> A quote from a text in the possession of the Brothers (presented in the E.Phil book) speaks to this:

Take heed of the use of the eye, for if it becomes ensnared by looking upon objects of desire and entrapped by what is believed to be beautiful, it will then be setting aside your first hope, the ability of clear sight.

Take heed of the use of the ear, for if it is not used fully and clearly and without prejudice, you will be setting aside your first prize, the privilege of hearing.

Take heed of the use of the tongue, for if it is used unwisely and wounds it will turn upon you and you will lose your first duty, the privilege of serving your fellows and the whole of life.

After all that obscure thinking, I started musing about the rain on my roof that was happening at the time . . . and it took me back to my childhood.

Back then, I spent most of my time outside playing. Not on rainy days, though. Rainy days were an indoor affair. I would take my allowance<sup>7</sup> and buy a model airplane or model ship that had to be put together with glue. The pictures to the right are of the models I distinctly remember building. The first is a P40 Warhawk, which was flown by the Flying Tiger in China during WWII; the second is an aircraft carrier, the USN Forrester, which was a post-WWII super-carrier build in 1955; and the third was a PT boat like the one President John F. Kennedy famously captained during WWII.



This was the old days when glue was highly spirited, probably spectacularly toxic, and had a kind of euphoric effect when sniffed. I hated the smell, but some kids didn't. We called them glue-sniffers or huffers (I even remember being at a street fair in England and running into a group of kids with spikey hair who were passing a bag around to sniff into—I'm sure the bag had glue in it). Anyway, I would put my model together staying as far away from the glue smell as I could.



And the relevance of all of this? The mimeograph fluid had a kind of glue smell to it, so I can remember kids in my high school, when they would get a freshly mimeographed stack of papers (like a test), would immediately put the sheets to their nose and inhale deeply. Never I, but many did.



Mimeograph machines were still around and being used when I got to Poly, and they were still the crank style. Within a year or two of my arrival, we got really fancy and bought self-motivated machines. These had an internal motor in them, so all you had to do was attach the stencil, hit a button, and the machine would rotate on its own. No more cranking for us, no sir. We were the height of educational sophistication.

Several years later, the school again went wild, throwing out the mimeograph machines and invested in new technology, a Xerox machine. This was truly a wonder. No more special stencils and mimeograph fluid and smell. No more attaching sheets to a drum. If you had something you wanted to copy, no matter what it was printed on, you just plopped it down on the machine's copy window, put the cover down, push the button and voila, as many copies as you'd requested came flying out into the outtake tray. It was amazing.

The downside was that it was such a wonder, everyone used it way beyond what you might expect. As a consequence, the administration sent out a notification at the beginning of the second year saying that "last year" we used somewhere around three to four million sheets of paper, and could we please exhibit some restraint.

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<sup>7</sup> I'd earn this by taking out the trash every day, by picking up the dog poop in the back yard which I would put in used milk containers and put in the trash, and by mowing the lawn once a week.

Restraint didn't really happen for years and years until another technological marvel occurred . . . the Internet. With everyone owning (or having access to) a computer, a teacher could scan something he or she wanted his or her students to have and email the resulting pdf to the students via the World Wide Web. Then, when we REALLY got fancy, teachers (or the school) created Web pages that students could go to whenever they wanted, and on those Web pages a teacher could place anything he or she wanted his or her students to have. The kids could print the sheets out on their home printers (or one of the school's printers), or just leave the information in the computer and study from there. No more millions of pieces of paper wasted every year (though most teachers still print out tests for the kids, so not completely eliminated). Amazingly efficient.

As a last aside, the conclusion one might make is that all of this efficiency has led to considerably less impact on nature and our world (many fewer trees being cut down to make mimeograph or Xerox paper, etc.). Sadly, that has not been the case not. The electronics in computers require rare earth metals which requires mining (most often in third world countries), so we are back to ravaging the planet, just in a different way. Living in a world that is trying to support eight-billion humans is not easy.

*Entry 11:* Light from a flame moves out from the flame and influences whatever it strikes. It doesn't decide that it will illuminate this surface but not that surface. It gives its light to whatever it falls upon. It is almost as though it wants to serve wherever it can (kind of like chelas and masters) . . . which brings me to my wonderment about *want*.

Almost all the catastrophes I have experience this time around have been intimately related to my *wanting something*. There is a fine line between seeing a need and moving to help and wanting things mindlessly. If my roof is leaking, the reasonable thing to do is fix it as best I can, then leave it. My wanting it to not leak is reasonable.

That said, *wanting* seems to be at the heart of my darker side. When I was young, I wanted to be a football player. As a little kid, I would walk around with my shoulders honched upward because that is what football players looked like with their pads on. I wanted to be a good baseball player. I wanted to be a good athlete in general. It never dawned on me that if I was to succeed in any of those things, someone else would have to endure loss (the only team that was not ultimately a loser was the team that won the CIF championship game). I wanted a girlfriend along with the sexual action that went along with that, completely oblivious to how my succeeding in that endeavor might affect the girl. I wanted to live pain free while throwing my body all over the place during sports.

My wants were never-ending, and as the Brothers once said, *bewildering*.

So what is it to have a *light within*? I suspect it is *not* something that can grow much if all I do is entertain the wants of the child within.

*Entry 12:* I worry about what will become of my cat, Isabella, should I die. I had a home for her lined up (Armelle, an ex-Poly teacher, who lives close by), but that fell through as her husband is allergic to cats, and having one in the house would be a stresser on her marriage. When I'm home, Isabella spends all of her time hanging around me. She is either lying on the dining table as I work there, or she is lying on ME as I'm working at the dining room table (she drapes herself across my left arm, more or less immobilizing it), or she is hiding behind the

screen of my laptop as I'm working at the dining room table, occasionally pawing around from the back side to get my attention. When I first sit down there, it is expected that I spend five minutes petting her and telling her what pretty girl she is and how soft she is (she is a long-hair and has amazingly soft fur), and what a sweet girl she is. This is all her due.

When I lie down in bed to listen to the radio, there she is, either on my chest, sphinxlike, or wedged up against my leg using it like a backstop. When I watch TV at night, there she is, either in my lap or, again, wedged up against a leg. She has expectations. In the morning, after I've gotten up and brushed my teeth and taken my pills, she can be found in the doorway between the kitchen and back porch, waiting for me to come out with my computer to go to the dining room table. As soon as she sees me coming, she races through the kitchen and up onto the table, waiting for me to arrive and sit down so she can arrange herself in whichever position she decides upon. In the evening, she can tell when I'm about to go to bed because I will go into the front bathroom and clean her cat box, then into my bathroom to brush my teeth. That is her cue to either get up onto the bed (this is her letting me know she wants to be brushed and combed) or go in and waits for me in the middle bedroom (this bedroom is on the other side of my bathroom). I will turn the lights off in the bathroom, go into to see if she's on the bed, and if she is nowhere to be found, I know I need to go turn the light back on in the bathroom, then go into the middle bedroom where she is waiting patiently, turn the light on there so we can spend five or ten minutes down on the ground, playing ball.

I thought about getting another cat to keep her company, but I've seen how she's reacted to cats outside through the sliding glass door, and don't think she would like that. I am her world, in other words, even if it only because I'm the only show in town.

The Brothers have said that our younger brothers in the animal kingdom are more accepting of their situation than we know. That said, I may have to make a concerted effort to not die over the next few years, not, that is, until she has gone and I no longer have a little Being dependent upon my presence. (And as I'm writing this, she's just come over to lie down across my left arm, which means I'm typing this with one right-hand finger . . . ). She is a very sweet Being.

*Entry 13:* (1/18/2026) I've been thinking more about the experience very high chelas have during the solstice, and how sunlight brings them out of their meditation. I would never suggest that I understand what goes on in those meditations. All I've said to date is that on behalf of humanity as a whole, they move into the inner worlds to stand against the powers of darkness. But what does that mean? Is it something like a wrestling match? I don't think so. So what really happens?

Again, I can't say, but I did have an interesting thought this morning. As I said above, I've been doing this gratitude meditation each morning, and at some time during the effort the sun comes in through the sliding glass door of my bedroom, and onto my face (coming in from the side) as I lay on my back in bed. This morning, I did things a bit different.

Lying on my side so the full force of the sunlight would hit me square in the face when it came up over the back fence, I began to think about what it might be like in the Great Pyramid on the morning of the revival. As I lay there in relative darkness (the sun hadn't yet come up), I realized that I had to generate within myself light. I guess you could say I *imagined* light around me, but in any case, there was light coming from within me. And as I held that light, I realized that if any darkness of thought came toward me, it would either discommode me and become a

part of my thinking or would be swamped by the brightness of the light I'd generated from within.

Once the inner light seemed well established and seemed to have filled my inner space, I just sat with it. It did pass through my mind that I was going to have to lie there for quite some time before the sun would come, but it also dawned on me that this was a state I wished to both hold and make a permanent part of myself, and if that was the way I was going to be from there on, time really didn't matter. I was what I was.

I held the light for several minutes before the sun did, indeed, come up. And as it did, I realized the light I held inside me and the ever-so-brilliant light coming from that great Being were of the same stuff. It was though the two lights combined, making me even more powerfully connected to the thoughtforms that were a part of the light. And in that, I got a small glimmer of how a chela, after having spent three days holding within themselves light, might have reacted to the sudden presence of the sun on that last day in the heart of the pyramid.

*Entry 14:* I mentioned earlier that I was a little apprehensive about my next time around. It finally dawned on me what I'm worried about. This time around, I have a certain amount of knowledge. I can listen to the awful things coming out of Washington with a certain amount of detachment, knowing that karma is at work and though I don't like what's happening, there is a cosmic method to the madness. There is a chance that in my next incarnation, I may not have that buffer, which means life could be a lot harder to negotiate.

The Brothers once said that any state you can achieve with drugs (I think we were talking about LSD at the time) you can achieve through meditation. The difference is that if you achieve the state through disciplines, what you end up will be yours and you won't need drugs to get there. Put a little differently, the qualities you build into yourself in the here and now are YOURS, they are a part of you. So if I come back some time down the line and don't have direct contact with the Brothers, what I *will* have direct contact with will be what I have built into myself.

What I think I should be focusing on, in other words, are the qualities I would want to animate when I come back again, whether I am privilege enough to have outward contact with the Brotherhood or not. That way, what I bring back in with me will be mine.

*Entry 15:* Huell Howser was a burly, down-home TV personality who hosted KCET's *Videolog* from 1983 to the mid 1990's. These were very fun, educational shorts centered on life in Southern California. One of his pieces, which was resurrected and run on PBS recently (he died of prostate cancer in 2013), was him talking to the owners of Clifton's restaurant in Los Angeles. I'm talking about this because it reminded me of something that happened when I was in high school.

As you will know if you read the autobiography, I was one of the wide receivers on San Marino High School's football team in 1965 (I was a junior) when we won CIF. We didn't think we were going to the play-offs because we had lost the last game of the season to La Canada, and as a consequence ended up in second place in our league (along with three other teams). Thinking our season was over, everyone on the football team went to Big Bear to ski the day after the La Canada game (this was a Saturday). On the way back, our very clean-cut, hard-hitting linebacker, Jeff Clinton, suggested we stop in to his family's restaurant, Cliftons, and

have something to eat. I had never heard of Cliftons and knew nothing about the family (aside from Jeff, who was a good guy and ended up being ASB president in our senior year— additionally, I saw him a year after graduation—he had gone to Berkeley for college, had very long hair, and I’m pretty sure had become a part of the anti-war movement up there). I wanted to get home, but my excuse for not taking him up on the offer was that I didn’t have any money. He surprised me by saying that we could eat for free, not because he was a part of the family but because his family’s tradition was to feed anyone who came through the door whether they could pay or not (apparently, over one ninety-day period during the depression, the restaurant fed 10,000 people for free, all part of the family’s Christian ethos to serve the needy).

Anyway, one of the things Howser said in this Videolog was that the original Cliftons had a waterfall inside, and I’ll be damned if it didn’t spark a memory. I can distinctly remember my mom taking me to a fascinating restaurant in Los Angeles when I was wee small, and the restaurant had a huge (like, 20 feet high) waterfall in it. I was enthralled, and apparently it was a part of Jeff’s family original establishment.

*Entry 16:* (1/24/2026) Again, as I pointed out in the autobiography, juxtaposition has played a large part of my evolution as I’ve tried to understand this place. It has happened again.

This is the last year I will be a Poly. I have nothing of consequence to do during the first semester as the *Cosmology, Astronomy and Relativity* class doesn’t start until the second semester. That means I’ve been doing a lot of peaceful thinking. I’ve had no pressures on me, not really, and I’ve had the opportunity to just think a lot.

The second semester started and so did the class. It is a no-brainer for me as I thoroughly understand what I want to talk about, but I noticed that my thinking was no longer deeply introspective. I am now burning mental energy on dealing with my students and being ready every day to run the class. As I said, this isn’t hard for me, it just means my focus is no longer inward. That reminded me of the preamble to the first chapter of Talbot Mundy’s book *Om, The Secret of Abhor Valley* (these chapter preambles in the book supposedly came from a Ringding Gelong Lama—that isn’t the case with this quote, but I’m mentioning the lama anyway because I just find the name—Ringding Gelong Lama—fun). It reads:

He who would understand the Plains must ascend the Eternal Hills, where a man’s eye’s scan Infinity. But he who would make use of understanding must descend into the Plain, where Past and Future meet and men have need of him.

This hit a nerve on two fronts. First, that first semester, I had pretty much left the Plains and focused on “other things.” But now it’s time to return to the Plains, metaphorically speaking.

The other front is more interesting. I know I’ve talked about this before, but I am still thinking about what is going to happen next time around. I have knowledge, but it’s knowledge I’ve been given by the Brothers. What of that is really mine? What of that will shine through on its own next time around. If this incarnation is any indication, I may be in trouble. I was a very child-self driven, instinctual kid, not very nice in some instances and not at all thoughtful beyond my own small self. Once the light was turned on (it started, if you will remember, with that meditation I did at my mom’s house during Easter break the year *before* mom had her problem and I met Kay and the Brothers), I had my troubles but it was metaphorically the beginning of

me ascending the Hills. My next life may be the true “returning to the Plains.” If that be the case, building into myself as much of *lasting quality* as I can this time around is going to be really important, because it may be true that all I’ll be bringing with me will be that which is really mine.<sup>8</sup>

*Entry 17:* I saw a documentary of sorts on the life of the Buddha which was partially narrated by Richard Gere and shown on PBS. It was a very kindly, gentle telling of the Buddha’s story that I very much enjoyed watching. My main quibble was that they didn’t do a very good job of letting people know that the Buddha’s quest to understand the cause of pain and suffering and sorrow, and the path to the cessation of pain and suffering and sorrow, was motivated by a desire to give his wife and child, both of whom he loved very much, and his father and his people the only thing that would truly make their lives better, which was the answer to those questions. Because that wasn’t explicitly stated, people watching the documentary might have gotten the impression he did what he did for himself.

The story highlights the path of the Buddha leading to enlightenment. My only other quibble with the production was that in telling the story, you kind of got the feeling that the path to enlightenment was primarily the focusing on one’s self to the exclusion of all else. I suppose at a particular point in a chela’s life when the Being is ready to take that monumental step, that is what must be done. But it has to be remembered that the Brothers differentiated between the selfless Buddhas and the selfish Buddhas with the latter being individuals who took this path, then accepted Nirvana essentially leaving humankind behind and to its own devices (this, clearly, not what the Brothers had done as they are still here).

I guess what I’m getting at is there must be a razor’s edge of effort, where the Being is aware of what is going on in the world and is helping where it is karmically correct to do so, but is also focused on the self as it attempts to become an adult in a spiritual sense. As always, motivation seems to be the key.

*Entry 18:* (02/02/2026) I had one of those dreams that didn’t hold standard symbolism but that had a message to it. I was in my living room. It was nighttime. The lamp was on and was dimly lighting the place. I noticed that the front door was open. There seemed to be someone there. When I went, a tall man had opened the screen door but hadn’t come in—he was just standing there—and when I saw him he mumbled something about having a package for me (I had the impression he was supposed to be a FedEx driver). It was very hard to hear what he

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<sup>8</sup> Several months after I wrote this section, I was thinking about how I should be reacting, or not reacting, to all the horrible things that had been going on in the country, what with Trumps presidency, and what I’ve been talking about here hit me in a somewhat different way. What I realized was that the life of a chela is kind of like walking a tightrope. On the one hand, there is the need to grow inwardly (this could be called *spiritual growth*). That is an effort that, when given, is not something one can really talk about to others (I noticed this when I first started out with the Brothers—after having a period of serious inward growth, I’d talk to my mom on the phone and find I had very little to tell her—what was important in my life was not a public kind of thing). On the other hand, there is the need to move outward into one’s community of fellows to be of service. It is this service that builds within the self the impetus to take the path of the selfless Buddhas (those who turned back to serve after enlightenment, which is to say the path of the Brothers), versus the path of the selfish Buddhas (those who accepted the blowing out into Nirvana upon enlightenment). The balance between the inward path and the outward path, that is the tightrope.

was saying, so I asked him to repeat himself. He again mumbled something in very low tones. I didn't like the feel of the situation and said I wasn't interested, and then I woke up.

This reminded me very much of the dream I had (and recounted in the autobio) of the Dark Brother who was standing outside my house, a glass house in which none of the doors could be locked. As I said in the autobio, I had focused my thoughts at the Dark Side and an interaction I knew the Brothers and some of their chelas were having with the Dark Brothers (a very foolish thing to do on my part), and one of the chelas had to come protect me from the very powerful dark Beings I had prodded with that thought. The dream was letting me know what a dangerous and stupid thing I had done.

This wasn't quite as pointed a dream as that, but it did begin me thinking about what I had been doing in the recent past, and how I needed to make some changes. Specifically, I had been allowing myself to be drawn into the thought-flows that swirl around the actions of President Trump. I would watch the news, which nightly recounted a new horror Trump had animated that day, then I would wake up at 2 AM to pee and not be able to get back to sleep thinking about all of this (which is to say, I would slip back into the thought-stream that was flowing around the man, his actions and the reactions of those who were witnessing the atrocities of the time). That was the darkness I was toying with without proper protection.

My remedy? I began making efforts to keep my mind clear of the normal reactions people might have to what I was seeing (the anger and stress and feeling of injustice). I did this by remembering that nothing really happens that isn't karmically correct, that I didn't know the karmic past of the Beings having problems, and that although I would help (most probably) if I could, getting all worked up over something I truly have no control over wasn't helping anyone or anything.

Interesting add-on to all of this: Cathy, who is in her late 80's at this point, has been having energetic problems lately. Brian, who is quite a sensitive healer, said he could sense that energy was being drained from her by elemental forms that had attached themselves to her. He was able to clear them out, which helped, but then she made the mistake of watching the news later in the week and the problem returned. Brian's remedy was for her to wash herself down several times a day in white light. My additional to all of that was that she go through that tonal pattern the Brothers gave us that affects the chakras, then do the flooding with light, then mentally pull up and tie off the shield that naturally exists around her aura.

My point in recounting all of this is that I realized that my morning meditation did include *the light within* but not the pulling up of the shield, and that I was doing nothing of the sort at night before going to sleep. Last night was the first night I did all of this, and I slept without incident. This will be a new addition to my nightly regiment (after playing with the cat) from here on out.

*Entry 19:* (2/08/2026) When I was a kid, I would spend most of my summer days around the house going barefoot. Before my mom and stepdad and I moved to San Marino, we lived for a time in West Covina. In the back yard off to the side there was a basketball hoop attached to the garage. The ground in that area was covered with gravel. When I would play back there, I would do it barefoot. In fact, I went everywhere barefoot, a pretty gutsy thing to do as summer was hot and the asphalt streets were way hotter. The point is, I built up very thick callouses on my feet due to the way I lived life early on.

Right around the time I retired, I began again going barefoot whenever I could. I took walks in the summer, braving hot streets, and I took walks in the winter, braving cold conditions (part of what gives people cold feet is poor circulation—my circulation is apparently very good, so my feet rarely felt cold).

I'm pointing all of this out because just a few days ago, I was wearing shorts. My legs were exposed and my bare feet were also exposed. I was thinking about something, sitting with my elbows on my knees and my head in my hands looking downward, when I noticed my feet.

Have you ever done that? If so, I hope you have marveled at how remarkable feet are. They are little platforms that jut out at right angles from the body. They can be kind of pudgy, which makes them even more adorable. They have little appendages at their ends that help micromanage movement. They are, in a word, kind of fun. If you have never taken the time to appreciate your feet, you should. They are worth it. (And I might add, as I look at the photo I took of mine, mine are pretty beat up. You can also kind of see my varicose veins, which I got from my grandmother. Not pretty, but still worth admiring for all they do for me.)



**Entry 20:** I am a part of a physics blog. It was originally called prettygoodphysics. I'm not sure what it is now. I don't regularly contribute to it for all sorts of reasons, but there are times when someone says or asks something that trip my fancy, and I reply. Some of the stuff I've come up with has been somewhat entertaining, so I may in the future go back, dig up what I've contributed, and list it below. This time around, I'm talking about *negative work*.

I introduce the idea of work to my students with what I call an island series scenario. It goes like this:

You have been kidnapped by a crazed physics nerd and left on an island with twenty-four hours to solve the following problem. Solve the problem and you get to leave. Don't solve the problem and you don't (it's kind of like *Gilligan's Island* meets *Survivor*).

The problem: You are told that a small mass (a cart) will be accelerated by a single force, and the question asked will be, "Will the *velocity change* be relatively big or relatively small."

You respond with, "What the hell. How should I know?" to which your captor says, "OK, well, I'll let you ask two questions before giving your answer, but not "is the velocity change big or small," and because I had a bad experience with kinematics when young, any allusion to that approach will outrage me."

What two questions should you ask?

The first question is, "How big is the force  $\vec{F}$  (the arrow over the F tells you the force is a vector, which is to say, a quantity that has both a magnitude—a size—and a direction

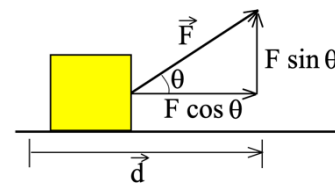
associated with it)?” This is reasonable. If the force is large, you might expect the *velocity change* to be large, whereas if it is a wisp, not so much.

The second question is, “Over what distance  $\vec{d}$  does the force act? (again, the arrow denotes a displacement vector whose magnitude is  $d$  and whose direction in this case is the direction of motion).” Again, this is reasonable. If the force acts over a few centimeters (a small  $\vec{d}$ ), then probably not such a large velocity change, but if it acts over a mile, then probably big.

When physicists determine the parameters that will likely have something to do with a qualitative question like this, the standard procedure is to multiply the parameters together. If the resulting quantity is big, the phenomenon being examined will likely be pronounced. If small, not pronounced.

Using this approach, it would appear that the velocity change is related to  $Fd$  (when vectors are written without the arrow, what is being referred to is the size, or magnitude, of the vector, disregarding its direction part). The rub here is that the force could be at right angles to the displacement (like, a cart moving over a table with a force being upward at right angles to the table). In that case, the force would clearly not motivate the object to pick up speed (or slow down). To deal with that problem, it is observed that the force, as a vector, could have a component along the line of the displacement (I call this F-parallel, or  $F_{\parallel}$ ), and a component perpendicular to the displacement (I call this F-perpendicular, or  $F_{\perp}$ ). If that be the case, what gets multiplied by  $d$  would be the component along the line of the displacement, or  $F_{\parallel}$ . That’s the part of the force that will make the object change speeds.

In other words, the quantity we are seeking, which is formally called *work*, turns out to be  $W = F_{\parallel}d$ , or (from the diagram)  $Fd \cos \theta$ , where  $\theta$  is the angle between the line of  $\vec{F}$  and the line of  $\vec{d}$ . (This product is, in formal,



mathematical terms, called a *dot product*, and its symbol is  $\vec{F} \cdot \vec{d}$ )

There are two other things to know about work. The first is that if a force produces positive work, the force will be generally along the line of the motion (so the angle will be less than  $90^\circ$ ), and the force’s action will tend to make the body speed up (in fact, if it is the *only* force acting, the body *will* speed up). If the force is generally opposite the direction of motion, the force will do negative work and the body will tend to slow down.

You now have all the information you need to understand the kerfuffle that I ran into on that blog. This was started by a movement amongst AP Physics teachers who are teaching the non-Calculus version of AP Physics to get rid of *negative work* because “it confuses our students.” That is what I was speaking to with my reply. And that reply follows:

I am all for anything that might make the lives of our students easier, but this particular move (getting rid of *negative work*) kind of reminds me of the 1897 effort in the Indiana State Legislature to pass a law redefining  $\pi$  as 3.2 (they very nearly succeeded—the lower house passed the bill; the only reason the upper chamber didn’t follow suit was because a math professor from Purdue University was visiting at the time and was able to enlighten the legislature as to where  $\pi$  came from and what it was designed to do).

(Back to the *negative work* question.) That people think this is a good idea is not, in my opinion, their fault. University professors all the way back to the 1990’s complained that high school students coming into their classes knew how

to do the math but didn't really understand the physics (this being moderately amusing as what was happening in good high school classes was exactly what was happening in most university classes). So when Physics 1 and Physics 2 were created, they erred on the conceptual side (they did this for several reasons) and seriously curtailed the presentation of the math that *models* the physics.<sup>9</sup> With that backdrop, I suspect it is possible that some of the teachers who teach those courses don't feel all that comfortable explaining the intricacies of the math needed to *do* hard core physics (again, not their fault).

To see this, take a problem everyone knows how to do. A block moves with velocity  $v$  on a frictionless surface. A force  $F$  is applied in the opposite direction of motion, acting over a distance  $d$ . As a consequence, the block slows down.

A physics nerd decides to determine the amount of *work* done by the force. Noting that the angle between the force and displacement is 180 degrees, he/she executes the dot product required to do a work calculation and finds that the cosine term yields a negative sign. In other words, the work being done by  $F$  is negative.

If this was my problem in my class, the first thing I would point out is that the negative sign has *nothing to do with direction*. It is there solely to highlight the fact that the force, which is slowing the body down and, hence, diminishing its kinetic energy, *is pulling energy out of the system*. That is what the math is telling us, and in my opinion, students ought to know that.

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<sup>9</sup> There was actually a lot going on with this move. A bit of history will explain. I first taught C-level AP Physics in 1978, about ten years after the AP program was rolled out by the College Board (it was called AP-C; there was also a non-Calculus version called AP-B). It was billed as an opportunity for a bright high school student to get college credit for taking a college level physics class in high school.

In the early 1990's, Eric Mazur from Harvard came on the scene and maintained that physics at the university level was being taught all wrong (he was, I might add, right). At the time, the accepted approach saw a physics professor laying out theory in lectures (kind of like a sage imparting wisdom to the peasants) coupled with a graduate student holding problem-solving sessions. Mazur was not very successful in convincing university professors to change their ways, so he approached the College Board. The idea (as best I could tell) was to force high school teachers who wanted their students to pass the AP Physics test to teach in this more enlightened way (this, not being a bad thing).

In 2015, the B test (which was a horror because too much had been jammed into its curriculum) was replaced by a more inquiry-oriented set of classes, Physics 1 and Physics 2. What the Physics 1 and 2 classes did (and do) was very much in alignment with what Mazur wanted the College Board to do years earlier.

Although the new approach certainly has its bright spots, it has two fairly substantial drawbacks. The first is kind of a *truth in lending* problem. The year before the new program was instituted, AP Graders in Kansas City were given the opportunity to spend an evening listening to College Board officials lay out the new approach. I was in the audience that year. During the *question and answer* period, one intrepid soul asked, "Is there any correlation between what professors are teaching in comparable classes at the university level, and this new program?" The answer given by the College Board spokesman was, "No, no correlation at all." This was not ideal for a program that promised a college level physics experience in high school.

The other rather glaring deficiency was the dialing back of the use of mathematics in the course.

As far as I can tell, Physics 1 and 2 teachers do a masterful job of presenting the physics in this new way, but the de-emphasizing of the math has taken its toll. Among other things, it has apparently motivated a group of teachers to suggest we get rid of the idea of *negative work*. I don't want to appear disrespectful—I am aware of the pressures on teachers as they attempt to help confused students make their way through the physics, but I don't think that shortchanging the math is a good way to do that, not, at least, if you want to understand the full scope of the physics.

I didn't post the response. What I wasn't realizing when I read the original post was that the teachers involved were dealing with kids who didn't have a particularly strong math background and who weren't being made to deal with that because Physics 1 and 2 had been made into *physics for poets* classes with a dab of math included. Demanding that those teachers throw math that wasn't really sanctioned by those classes wasn't really fair.

What also came to mind as I thought about it was that I was being an elitist. I had been blessed with "low level kids" who were really quite bright if held against your average student in America, and I'd had that all my teaching career. I was demanding of these other teachers the same rigor I was able to demand of my own students when, in fact, my kids were way beyond theirs (or, at least, most of theirs) in ability. So as fun as it was to write, I let the post slide.

*Entry 21:* (2/11/2026) I talked about this in the autobiography, but we had an individual who was around the group who was constantly trying to stir things up. He would make statements that he knew would push people's buttons, then once said he'd just sit back and enjoy the fireworks. When asked about his actions, the Brothers said he had a very porous aura and that there were entities on the other side who were partially overshadowing him (they even referred to them as *the committee*).

With the exception of the fact that this individual was not a mean-spirited soul at heart, President Trump shows all the signs of someone who is similarly afflicted, except with him the entities pulling the strings are from the dark side (and being in the position he is in, his jabs cause a lot more chaos to a lot more people). This doesn't absolve Trump of what he's been doing, but it does cast a little different light on his actions.

It also doesn't excuse people who look at Trump's actions and not see what is really going on in his mind: forcing peace agreements between combatants around the world to bolster his case for a Nobel Peace Prize; wanting to own Greenland for its so-far untapped rare earth mineral deposits; wanting to control Venezuela for its oil (the largest recognized reserve in the world); wanting to get rid of migrants because, well, he's white and they aren't; his unwillingness to back down from any stand he takes because that means him losing with winning being all that is important to him.

Trump is not an enigma.

*Entry 22:* The Brothers once said, "We don't need people who try to be good, we need people who ARE good." It struck me the other day how easy it is to wallow in thoughtlessness and selfishness, and how hard it is to elevate up and above that, and stay there. It got me thinking about how nature might mimic that ever so human quality, and the lowly atom came to mind.

In the atom, electrons spend most of their time in the lowest energy level available to them (kind of like the selfish human). This is called the ground level. It is possible to inject energy into the atom, though, and elevate it to a higher energy level (someone trying to act responsibly in a spiritual sense). Unfortunately, nature tends to migrate to least energy states, so fairly quickly an energized electron will dump some of its energy and migrate back to the ground state (this is most of us trying to be spiritual but falling off after a time of effort). EXCEPT, there are situations in which an elevated electron will stay in a state for a really, really, really

long time. These are called metastable states (if they didn't exist, we would not have lasers). An electron in a metastable state can stay in that state for tens of thousands of times longer than "normal."

Two things popped into my head with this. First, I wonder if there aren't situations in which a metastable state becomes the new ground state (that would coincide with someone who had reached enlightenment and the new norm was an advanced Being). Then a second thought passed through my mind. The Brothers once told us that even they, when in a body, have to expend a certain amount of energy to keep the body pure and the thoughtforms that are negative from affecting the self. This, I guess, would correspond to making the metastable state the new ground level, and having to keep pumping a bit of energy into it to keep it from decaying back to the old ground.

And I might add, this is just me playing with the ideas. With the exception of that last few thoughts, the Brothers talked about none of this.

*Entry 23:* (2/18/2026) As I pointed out in the autobiography, my mom was a natural sensitive. She would have premonition about things. If there was no emotional tie to the circumstance that motivated a premonition, she would be pretty close to spot on as far as accuracy goes (she had had so many instances where this was the case, she really didn't question what presented itself to her in this sense). What I'm not sure she understood was that if there was personal emotion involved, she could be jammed. As I also said in the autobiography, being psychic really means the individual is aurically porous. That was surely the case with her.

Her unwillingness to accept that I wasn't lying about things when I was in middle school is a good example of her being jammed, but another example popped up years later after she and my stepdad had divorced. She was living in the Capistrano. I was there for vacation (I was going to school at ASU at the time). He had come down for some reason or other, and after he left she said in all seriousness that that would be the last time we would see him, and that on the way back up to Pasadena he would be in a car accident and die. I don't think this was wishful thinking. She and he were getting along well and there was no reason for her to wish him ill. She just had a very strong feeling that this was going to happen.

It didn't happen, in fact. I'm sure this was a surprise for her, but it wasn't long after that that she had the *I'm one of the bad guys* episode, so I think this was a time when that auric shield of hers was beginning to thin out more quickly and, unbeknownst to her, she was becoming more susceptible to being "influence" by entities on the other side.

*Entry 24:* I've been kind of impressed over the last few years with the thinking behind some of the Jewish holidays. The most obvious is Rosh Hashanah, when participants reflect on how they have acted during the previous year, identifying faults and shortcomings in the process. It ends (after ten days) with Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, where repentance, forgiveness and the repairing of relationships is focused on.

Another that I just ran across is Tu B'Shvat, or the "New Years for Trees." It falls sometime in January/February and honors nature. The thing I find most fascinating about this festival is its Kabbalistic basis. The Seder (ceremony) uses fruits, nuts and wine to represent four realms, the physical world, the realm of angels where "the sap of life begins to flow," the intellectual realm and Divine creation where things "arise from nothingness through thought,"

and the highest spiritual world with its direct proximity to God. (I got most of this last sentence from an AI—that was the best Google could do). My point is that the ideas are very Brothers-like. I suspect Kabbalists back when this was put in motion knew what they were talking about.

And as a minor point, Kabbalism is the mystical side of Judaism. It explores man's connection to God. It is funny, the first book I read about it spent a lot of time talking about the cosmic significance of numbers. Because it was called *The Kabala*, I assume it was a foundational text. It wasn't. There was a whole lot I missed.

*Entry 25:* (I'm not sure if I read this or if it was a story the Brothers told.) A disciple found a teacher sitting next to a river. The disciple asked the teacher how he could move more quickly upon the path to enlightenment. The teachers said, "Look into the river." The man did whereupon the teacher grabbed the man by the scruff of the neck and forced his head under the water. The man was under water for a very long time, all the while flailing with hands moving frantically to get back up to the surface and air. When the teacher finally let go, the man came up coughing and sputtering and completely discombobulated. Once the man had calmed down, the teacher said, "When you want enlightenment as much as you wanted that breath of air, enlightenment will come."

My life has followed an odd path. I would have been perfectly happy to meet someone, fall in love and live happily ever after. The idea of spirituality was as foreign to me when I was young as was politics. What I kind of marvel at is the way life and karma herded me. I had opportunities to have girlfriends and relationships, but my self-involvement always ran underneath the surface and got in the way.

I don't think this was serendipitous. I think life and karma had a plan of sorts for me. I remember saying to one of the Brothers that I kind of looked forward to being alone with myself. His response was that I would have plenty of opportunity to experience that during my life. I think he was seeing where karma was pointing me.

I'm talking about this because I've noticed lately that when I direct gratitude to the Brothers, specifically to Morya and KH (like, in my morning meditation), I sometimes have intrusive thoughts get in the way of what I'm trying to do. I finally grabbed hold of myself to see why this was happening, and I realized there was a part of my child-self that was trying to sabotage my relationship with them. There is evidently a part of myself that doesn't want to move toward the Brothers and all they stand for. I have no idea what this part of myself thinks is a *better path* to take—maybe it wants to have girlfriends and fun and be without responsibility in a cosmic sense, but it does seem to exist inside me.

Aside from my early days, life and karma haven't allowed my small self to go off the rails. Being alone has given me time to do the things I've done, all of which have given me the tools to live as I have and write as I have. But if life hadn't nudged me as it had, I'd have as merrily gone in a more temporal direction. This, I think, is what worries me. Next time around, what kinds of guard rails will be place on my obstreperous, selfish self? Because if they hadn't been in place this time around, I'd have ended up in a very different place than I am now . . . and that's kind of scary.

There is one more twist to all of this. One of the things I point out in the autobio is that when the highest in me confronts the child-self within to see why a not-so-savory aspect of itself is showing up, the child will invariably present an explanation that seems reasonable but with

time does not solve the problem. It does this most profoundly when it does not want to give up on that something. The child will, in other words, obscure the REAL driver of the self in favor of a superficial band aid. (Interestingly, the Brothers have a name for this perverse part of the self. It is called *the dweller*.)

I'm point this out because up until just a while ago, my understanding of the why of the *intrusive thoughts* problem was as I have presented above. But that has been a ruse. What has really been going on is that when I would project my mind toward the Brothers, I would not be seeing them *as they in reality are*. I have been overlaying on them typically human qualities that are nowhere close. And in a much broader sense, I have been doing that with my perception of the world in total.

I have in the past said that I spend way too much time distracted with TV show plots and book plots and all the other typically human distractions normal people entertain. This should not be surprising. I am human, just like everybody else. What is different for me is that I know I should be more focused on what is really happening in the real world, not what is happening in a fantasy world. Chelas don't live in a fantasy world. I'm no chela, but that doesn't mean I can't try to live as one.

*Entry 26:* (2/19/26) I've started noticing something interesting on my bike ride to Poly to do my class. Most of the trip across San Pasqual is uneventful, so I've been focused on the devic forms and "nature" as it exists (the great devas of the trees along with the lesser devas of the plants and grasses). It is a very peaceful, serene experience. When I come across a human being, though, it is as though I'm coming across a mini whirlwind. There is so much going on, and the Being's presence is touching and affecting so much of its surroundings.

*Entry 27:* (2/21/2026) There is a dichotomy that has to be negotiated. To move along a spiritual path, you have to look within. You cannot allow the self to be tossed and turned by the events and thoughtforms that would bring chaos. But to be useful, you have to look outward. You have to see what is happening within your everchanging sphere of influence. I suppose one might have whole lives devoted to looking within, and whole lives looking outward, but at some point the two will have to coexist. I've never thought of it this way, but I wonder if that is what the Buddha was talking about when he spoke of *the middle way*.

*Entry 28:* (2/21/2026) I so appreciate my old body. I've been working at the dining room table, writing up notes for any teacher who might want to come after me and present the *Cosmology, Astronomy and Relativity* class at Poly, and when I finished and left the table I was stiff and kind of hunched over and shuffling along like an old man. My body was letting me know it was old and not the body it had been fifty years ago, but it was also trying so hard to accommodate. I do love (and am grateful for) my old body.

*Entry 29:* (2/25/2026) I had an interesting dream last night. I was in Iran, of all places, with Kay and Cathy, in a serve-yourself restaurant. We had gotten separated (they went ahead in

the line) and I was standing in a line surrounded by people I didn't know. I was thoroughly confused as to what I was supposed to be doing. The guy behind me had a plate, so I asked where he got it and he showed me the cabinet where they were stored. I was feeling a little bit embarrassed about not knowing what to do, so I asked him where he got the food that was on his plate. He pointed to a series of containers on a table. I went to the table, found food that looked like what he had on his plate, and because there were no implements available to get the food out of the container, I used my fingers to fish out what looked like a small, redish pear. Upon doing this, I heard a couple of women off to the side whisper, "He put his hand in the dish!" They seemed to be ridiculing me for doing something that was clearly unacceptable. I got defensive, said I was sorry but didn't know what to do, whereupon they just sniffed at me. I said, "Come to America. You'll see." (This being me pointing out that they would run into customs there they wouldn't understand, and how would they like being made the butt of the joke in that case?)

Once I got the little food I was able to snag, and after being given a bill by a girl who was in charge of the line, I went outside to where Kay and Cathy were. I was seriously irritated by this time as they had left me alone, and the folks I had had contact with hadn't been very nice to me.

*I woke up irritated* and started to think about the experience (even though it had only been a dream). How should I have reacted to the incivility of the women, and why was I feeling so irritated even after having awakened? I couldn't seem to get a handle on how I should have acted in the situation. It was as though I was emotionally naked, and the emotions just took over. It wasn't until a bit later that it dawned on me. When chelas go into the inner worlds to stand against the great negative thought-forms, there is truly nothing between they and them. They are "emotionally naked," with only the quality of their Being present to protect them. My Being is not yet to a point where I can stand without the rationalizations I use to deal with situations, rationalizations that were not available to me during the dream. The whole affair was very interesting.

And for the record, my cat is draped over my left arm, asleep, as I type this. She really does enjoy being with her person.

*Entry 30:* (2/28/2026) Trump and company (Israel) just started bombing Iran, which means the U.S. just started a war. The temptation is to think *good*. The Ayatollah's in charge are religious fundamentalists and that have held power since 1979. They have fomented Islamist revolts in the region and have been extremely rigid in their views of how their people should live (Sharia law, women with heads covered, etc.). Nearly every attempt at reform within their population has been met with a vicious crackdown. The most recent, which occurred just a month or so ago, saw upwards of 30,000 protesters killed in the streets. Trump had said that if the government hurt civilians, he would come to their aid. He didn't when they really needed him, but now he and Israel are trying to force a regime change.

All of this got me thinking about the question, "What do you do when confronted with a seemingly evil individual . . . or country?"

I used to talk to my kids about how one might confront a dissonant person in their life. What I had to say was a bit naive and, frankly, not very well thought out. Specifically, I said there was no reason to respond with violence (this, in fact, is always true). The reason for this was what wasn't so well thought out. I pointed out that there are plenty of individuals out there

who would be more than happy to visit violence on anyone that crossed them, and that sooner or later the perpetrator you were having trouble with would run across one of those individuals.

This misses a whole slew of points. The most important is that nothing really happens by accident. If you are drawn into a situation in which you are confronted by what appears to be an unpleasant person, there is a very good chance that the dissonance you are seeing in the other individual *you have inside yourself*. It is not always linear (he smells so I must smell), but there is always *something* to learn about yourself from the experience. It is karma trying to get your self's attention.

The point is, even if you come up with a short-term solution to the dissonance (like bombing another country), you are really achieving nothing of lasting worth and are simply accumulating more and more bad karma.

*Entry 31:* (2/30/2026) I was standing in front of the bathroom mirror this morning, not really being mindful, thinking about what I would say to people in the Trump administration about war, when, as I was swallowing my gaggle of pills, one stuck in my throat. The sticking was reminiscent of the kind of situation the Heimlich Maneuver is required to remedy, and it was scary for a few short moments until I coughed the pill up. What flashed through my mind afterward was that a chela can never afford to mindlessly float in a mental sense, which was what I was doing, not even for a moment.

*Entry 32:* (3/02/2026) Gandhi once said that his only regret in life was not having every executed a truly selfless thought. Knowing himself well, I suspect he could see that even his purest thoughts had, maybe, one-part out of a thousand that wasn't quite right.

This is what makes talking about one's inner world so hard. If presented to the world, something that is miniscule in its insignificance can seem monumental to an outside observer. So how does one talk about subtleties without blowing them completely out of proportion in the mind of the reader? It's a problem I am about to face.

I invited all the members of the department to my yearly birthday party (it is usually billed as *Craig's Annual Surprise 35<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party*). There is a new, young teacher in the department who is female and who said she wouldn't be able to come because she would be out of town that weekend. In talking to her later, I said it was a shame she would miss the night because the highlight of the evening for a newcomer is often just seeing the house. I additionally said that if she (the woman) wanted to drop by sometime to see the place, I'd be amenable.

There was a lot going on in my head as we talked. Primarily, I knew that if she ever read my autobio, she would undoubtedly notice that the house was an important part of the story, and that seeing the place in the flesh might be useful. It was, in short, a perfectly innocent invitation.

Unfortunately, when I got home I realized that although I had no designs on the woman (she was a third my age and had a boyfriend), this had all the earmarks of the disaster that was last year's run-in with another young, female science teacher. That was also innocent, but because it wasn't obvious what was going on in my head during that interaction, I ended up in front of HR. It wasn't fun. I really hoped this wasn't going to go down the same rabbit hole.

When something happens that really bothers me after-the-fact, I trust that karma will take me where I need to go. If there is some karmic knot between me and the girl (as I think was the

case the previous year), it would work itself out. And if that working out had me being called up before HR, well, so be it.

What was interesting was that this kind of acceptance didn't help this time around, which meant there was something else I needed to see in the situation. With more thought, I realized what it was.

As far as I was concerned, there was absolutely nothing in my head centered on the fact that this was an attractive female, yet if the teacher had been a male, I don't think I would have made the offer. I wasn't angling for the woman. As I said, I was old as Methuselah in comparison to her, she was happily involved with a guy her age, and I wasn't looking for female companionship in any event. Still, there was some little bit of thinking deep inside me that motivated me to make the offer to a woman I wouldn't probably have made to a rookie guy. There was stuff going on underneath the surface that was not evident to me.

As of this writing, I have no idea if this is going to die a natural death or mushroom into something really awkward and unpleasant. (Later entry: in the end, nothing came of it.)

The Brothers said that part of what makes chelthood spooky is that if you screw up, karma really slams you. It doesn't do it to be mean. It does it to be sure you see there is a problem you need to deal with. I didn't really do anything wrong with this episode, but there was evidently a tiny speck of mindlessness that rode on the actions that, if I had been a chela, might have ballooned into a real mess. What appeared to be an irrationally fearful about how my actions might be taken was the kind of amplification I think chelas experience all the time. If you don't know there is a chink in the armor, you will never be able to fix it.

*Entry 33:* (3/04/2026) I had two interesting dreams over the last few nights. They didn't hold standard symbolism, but they were interesting nevertheless.

I, along with others, found myself in a beautiful, elegant, ornate, well-lit cathedral, complete with a high vaulted ceiling. At the front of the church was an elevated chair that was facing away from the main body of the room. When it was my turn, I get up into the chair and just sat. Except while I was in the chair, it became very evident that I was a spiritually evolved individual and, in fact, was the answer to the world's problems. I didn't think I was Christ. The feeling was quiet and steady and strong, and it instilled in me the belief that I was a savior, that I had spiritual power within me that was way beyond the norm.

I woke up and remember thinking, "What an odd dream."

The next night, I found myself in the same cathedral, except this time I started out knowing the power that resided in me. That, and I felt I was the only one who had it. But this time was different. When I went up to sit in the chair, the revelation that came that time was that EVERY human Being was like me. The degree to which that power was evident within them had to do solely with their willingness to let it out. I wasn't special, in other words. I was one of many.

What does this have to do with anything? The Brothers once said of us, "You are sleeping Gods." Those dreams seemed to have shown that vividly.

*Entry 34:* (3/06/2026) On my walk this afternoon (after my nap), I had a strong feeling of what it must be like for chelas in charge of looking after fledgling lay-chelas, and how they

must not put their finger on the scale in favor of the lay-chelas but instead must trust that everything will move in accordance to the karmic law.

*Entry 35:* (3/08/2026) I had a very dark dream last night. I'm not going to reinforce it by laying it out here, but it involved revenge and I think I had it because I needed to think more about revenge. To that end:

I think what the Israeli government has done in Gaza over the last several years has been driven by, among other things, revenge. They will say they are addressing an existential threat, and certainly, Hamas has been a thorn in Israel's side for years, but you can't look at those photos of Gazan cities completely devastated and think *precision bombing* and *appropriate response*. I think the mindset, at least for some in Netanyahu's cabinet, has been: *You killed 1200 of our people? Ok, we are going to kill 73,000 of your people. We are going to bomb your hospitals and schools and residential areas over and over and over again until you are left with nothing. We are going to snuff whole families of Palestinians off the face of the earth, and that is going to be OK with us, because we are the only ones who count* ("never again" was a battle cry within the Jewish community when I was a kid, but I suspect those good souls never imagined their government would add, *unless you don't happen to be a Jew*).



As much as I sympathize with the situation Israel and its people are in, these are not the acts of spiritually sane men. (And no, this does not make me antisemitic. It just that if it walks like a duck and quacks like a duck, there is a very good chance it's a duck.)

Whether you agree with all this or not is kind of immaterial, because what I think I was meant to notice was the fallacy at work here. The belief being perpetrated (as reasonable as it may seem) is that if you kill someone you don't like, or who doesn't like you, somehow the killing gets rid of the problem.

As reasonable as this may sound on a superficial level, it actually makes no sense. Critics of the war have rightly pointed out that all the bombing has really done is made Palestinians hate Israelis even more than before. And along with that, it provides fodder for hate and the breeding of more angry revolutionaries.

What isn't so obvious is that killing someone doesn't get rid of them, it just deepens the karmic knot that binds you and they together. At some point down the line, you will still have to deal with them and the knot. The dealing may happen in an otherwise benign setting—maybe you will both be working for the same company and be at odds with one another, or maybe you will find yourself in the middle of another armed conflict with, maybe, you NOT having

overwhelming military superiority as is the case in this conflict. But the bottom line is that no matter what the short-term convenience seems to be by killing, in the long run it is a bad move.

This place is charged with one task and one task alone. It is here to grow immortal souls, being who have learned through experience how to *exist in matter* without kicking up dust. As there is no death, killing others is not a reasonable way to go in any case.

*Entry 36:* (3/13/2026) The Iranian war has been going for two weeks now. Our governments, as is the case with all governments waging war, is trying to frame the war in as sympathetic way as possible, except the U.S. government seems unable to do that. David Brooks of *The Atlantic*, and conservative commentator on the *Brooks and Capehart* segment of the PBS NewHour (March 13, 2026), spoke to this in a roundabout way. Talking about how Hegseth (Secretary of the Department of Defense, or War, depending on your politics) and Trump and Trumps allies have been portraying things, Brooks observed:

The White House has pastors come in, they have prayer breakfasts they go to, they talk a lot about Christianity and Christian values. At the core of Christianity is the belief in the dignity of each person, that each human being is made in the image of God, and that is true of all humans, not just the ones you happen to like. What is happening here in Lebanon and Iran is death, its human death. I don't care who's dying, whether they are good guys or bad guys or innocents or supposed guilty, it's death. The people who fought WW II, who led our conflict in WW II, whether it was Franklin Roosevelt down to George Marshal to Omar Bradley, they understood the seriousness of this, that killing human beings is not a video game. It's not pixels on a screen. And whatever you think of the war—and I'm probably a little more hopeful than most—the way this is being described is almost barbaric. There's a great tradition of *just war theory*. Sometimes wars are just, but they're never good. They're never anything but horrific. To treat them otherwise is to insult the American people and to really be unnerving. It should be unnerving to everybody to see this level of triviality.

Aside from being an American, I have no part in any of this. All I can do is observe and work very hard not to become aggravated beyond belief about all the suffering my country is causing. Being *in the world but not of the world*. This is not an easy thing to do.



*Entry 38:* (3/31/2026) This was something I wrote back in August of 2024 (before I started *Afterthought*). I stumbled across it and thought I'd include it here. As a bit of a preamble, three hundred years before Christ, the Chinese philosopher Chuang Tze wrote (loose translation), "Last night I dreamt that I was a butterfly. When I awoke, I wondered if I was a man who had dreamed of being a butterfly, or a butterfly who was dreaming of being a man."

Most of us are not very respectful of dreams. They are these ephemeral things that just seem to happen at night, that aren't really substantial in a physical sense, and that often don't seem to have any relevance to our "real life." I personally, sometimes, have dream that include symbols that are relevant to my life, but I don't know how commonplace that is, and there are times when my view of dreams is just like everyone else's.

That doesn't mean there aren't interesting things about dreams worth noticing (assuming you do dream and you remember your dreams). For instance, have you ever noticed that when you are in a dream, everything seems perfectly normal. You have a body you can move around in; you interact with people and situation that happen in the world; there is not an inkling that anything non-physical is going on . . . except it is all a product of the mind. You *aren't* sporting a body, you just think you are. You *aren't* walking around in a real, fixed landscape, you just think you are. It is completely a fabrication of the mind, yet it is all very real when you are experiencing it. This became screamingly obvious with the very vivid dream I am about to recount.

It started with me looking out a large picture window and noticing that Jim Barry (Jim was the Arts Dept at Poly for years before he went to Caltech and became *their* Arts Dept.) was in the process of decorating a Christmas tree. I knew in the dream that this was unusual because it was at the start of the school year, and Christmas wasn't going to happen for several months. Nevertheless, I went out and began to talk to him, just like I used to do at Poly. We chatted for a few minutes, then went and sat on a bench that was against one of the buildings at Poly. In short order, Patty Thurlow (Patty is one of the chemistry teachers at Poly) arrived all excited because the couch she had ordered for her new office had arrived. The door to the office was next to where Jim and I were sitting, and she asked if we wanted to see. I said, "Sure," whereupon I realized that her new office had come into existence the previous year, and that it was actually *then* that she had gotten all of her office furniture. So as she opened the door to show us her "new" couch, I realized I was in the middle of living experiences that had happened *a year in the past*. I looked at the couch in the otherwise empty office, and took serious note of my state of mind. I was seeing the sky and talking to Patty and Jim, just as I always had, but the experience I was registering had already happened, except it was very real and very much in the present for me then. In other words, I was experiencing just like I always do. After a while I got up to leave. I walked along a path thinking about how weird it was that I was "in" an experience, living it as though it was just happening, but that in reality it had happened a year earlier.

When I woke up, I had a very clear picture of how life could be a lot like a dream. I was conscious in the dream. Everything seemed natural. Everything seemed normal. I was

experiencing. But it was all the consequence of my thinking. It was all happening in the world of thought.

I naturally wondered if ALL experience on the physical level was just Consciousness (you and me at our most basic level) experiencing settings that seem to be perfectly real while you were in them, but that were really the stuff of thought.

If that be the case, what do you do with that information?

My conclusion was that as interesting as it was, and as enlightening as it was when considering the power of thought and the inner worlds, in an odd way it didn't really matter. I was aware during the episode. I was thinking and acting and taking in information the way all Consciousnesses do when they experience. That the world was contrived was unimportant. The relationship I was having with Jim and Patty, and the way I was reacting to them, it all reflected who I am and what I had built into myself.

So is life a dream? We think of dreams as "out there," but are they? My conclusion was *who cares?* You do the best you can in the situation you find yourself. If it is based in physical matter or the world of pure thought, you are experiencing, and that is what is important.

And as a small aside (included later), how many times in the autobiography did I point out that the Brothers told us that the Divine Mind (God) *thought the worlds into existence*. You even get it in the Bible (John 1:1-3): *In the beginning was the Word (the consequence of thought), and the Word was with God, and the word was God.*

**Entry 39:** (4/2//2026) I awoke from my nap today and, as I usually do, I took a walk. As I wasn't around any of my younger brothers (i.e., people's pets) as I walked, I focused on sensing the devic presences (the nature spirits that animate trees, etc.) and on our younger brothers that are not so connected to humans (birds and bees and squirrels and lizard are my primary acquaintances). I was trying, in other words, to get out of my little bubble of self. It was a tranquil state. What was interesting, and I've noticed this before, was that when I would run into some other human walking, even if they were on the other side of the street, the inner activity of that person within their own bubble was like there was a whirlwind moving down the street. I am not so sensitive to be able to tell much more than that, that each person's life was buzzing around them as they walked through that tranquility, but I'm fairly certain that that is what is happening, and I found it interesting.

**Entry 40:** (4/8//2026) I've been thinking more about what full retirement is going to look like. For those with means, I think the idea is to spend time doing "stuff" they haven't had time to do while working. That is what a *bucket list* is all about. Travel, tinkering around the house or garden, being with family, reading, these are just a few of the hundreds of things retirees do. And when their list is completed, then what? Then the goal is to find things that just fills up one's time. Being bored. That is the enemy.

I'm unfortunately without a bucket list. As a teacher, having ten weeks off every summer provided all the time I needed to do those bucket list things. And on top of that, I'm still trying to live a life that at least somewhat shadows the life of a chela, and being

attentive to the moment does not generally accommodate finding ways to just float through time.

Interestingly, this need to do something useful in a cosmic sense after the main thrust of your life is over is reflected in ancient Hindu culture. The Brothers said there are two paths available to most people, the path of the householder and the path of the ascetic. Of the two, the more difficult is the path of the householder. The ascetic can hole himself (or herself) up in a cave somewhere and become as detached from the world as karma will allow. But the path of the householder requires one to coexist with others. The point is, once an individual has discharged his or her duties along the householding path, once the individual has had children and raised them, for instance, he or she becomes free to leave the family situation and go out into the world to *follow one's dharma*. In other words, the individual is allowed by society, encouraged even, to follow the personal spiritual path that has been provided by karma. It is not a sedentary existence, but in ancient times it was a path followed alone.

The time I've spent working at Poly has provided me with structure and friends and purpose, so I don't know what life is going to be like once I'm completely gone from the place. I suspect I will spend a lot of time in my head. I very much hope I don't devolve into a state where all I do is look for things to do that just help me pass the time (though I doubt that will happen . . .).

*Entry 41:* (4/10//2026) If you've read the autobiography, you will know that in one of the *Pranks I Have Known* chapters I talk about some of the more amusing misadventures I've had in my kitchen. Well, I had another last night.

I have what is probably a hundred-year-old cast iron skillet that is fairly small (cooking surface around 7 inches) but heavy (probably weighs a half pound). I have, within the last year or so, learned how to make full blown omelets in it. These are kind of amazing. I start with three eggs and a bit of water and salt which I beat into a slurry. When poured into the skillet, the egg that is actually in contact with the bottom of the skillet fries immediately making a kind of base, with the uncooked egg on top. As the egg on top cooks, I help it along by lifting a side of the cooking mass with a spatula and tilting the pan so egg can slop underneath the already cooked egg. At some point, most of the egg is cooked and I find myself with one, continuous, relatively solid disk of cooked egg with a tiny bit of egg slurry still on top. I go around the edge sliding a spatula underneath the disk from place to place to be sure no egg is stuck to the pan, kind of jostle the disk to get it moving, then flip the whole thing up into the air with a twist so that when it comes down and I catch it in the pan it is facing down. I let the reverse-side cook a little longer, then turn the fire off.

When I first tried this, the flip was the high point of the proceedings (throwing food into the air and catching it in a pan when it comes down is pretty cool, if for no other reason than if you get it wrong, you have egg everywhere). Once flipped, the real fun begins. Over one half of the disk, I lay inch-long pieces of cook asparagus; then I lay out sliced black olives; then I lay out sauteed mushrooms; then I lay out a layer artichoke hearts; then I lay out grated Goat Gouda and Monterey Jack cheese. Once all this laying

out is done, I fold the uncovered half over onto the half covered, and voila, I have a very thick, absolutely delicious omelet. I usually eat it with sour cream.

This is the extravaganza. There are times, though, when I want egg but not so much work. In those times, I will use my skillet to cook three-egg as before (complete with flip) then use the eggs as topping on mayonnaised toast (with a bit of salt to finish it off).

This is a lot easier to do, and this is what I tried to make last night. The amusement? Three-quarters of the way through the cooking process, I decide to see if the egg was stuck to the pan. To do so, I slightly elevated one edge of the pan and gave it a shake. Though this has NEVER happened before, the egg was so *not stuck* that half of it slid right out of the pan and onto the burner (that is, half was in the pan with the other half in the fire). It was hilarious. There I was, spearing huge pieces of cooked egg while working around the still burning burner flame trying to get the egg back into the pan. Sometimes I just crack myself up.

*Entry 42:* (4/10//2026) I was thinking this morning about what kind of a life I would like to have next time around. I was an athlete in this life, but in looking back I can see that the mindset I had in being a good athlete is not very kindly. With sports like football, you are trying essentially beat the other team into submission (this year, the coaches of one of the teams in the NCAA College Football finals said, on camera, *we have to be more VIOLENT*—he said it two or three times in the span of about thirty-seconds). I was a naturally good athlete this time around, and it was a useful appendage with my work at Poly, but I kind-of hope I will be a little less of an asshole next time.

*Entry 43:* (4/18//2026) I had an interesting thought this morning. If I had thirty-seconds to talk to Bibi Netanyahu (or Donald Trump, and a similar sentiment would hold for Putin, also), what would I say? I think I'd say: *When you die, you are going to come into contact with all the Beings you have touched in life, and that includes all the individuals you are responsible for killing in Gaza and Lebanon and Iran. I would suggest you pray for a long, long, long life, because when you die, I'm sorry to say, where karma takes you is likely to be not very pretty.*

After having the thought, it struck me as to how unevolved I am. The Brothers never forecast disastrous times ahead for people who were doing despicable things (in a cosmic sense). About the most I remember them ever saying was something to the effect of *they may find themselves in distress when they cross over . . . not that they WOULD find themselves in distress.*

*Entry 44:* (4/18//2026) The Cosmology, Astronomy and Relativity class met yesterday (a Friday), and when there was ten minutes left in the class the sound on the video I was showing just stopped. The reaction of the kids was, oh, well, you could always let us go early—it IS the end of the day on a Friday. I walked over to the clock to see how much time I'd be giving up, and when I did something flashed into my mind that I had completely forgotten.

Several weeks early, I had spent most of the period doing oral exams in the back room with individual kids. Toward the end of the period, Richard White entered classroom. I was just dismissing the kids for the day. He kind of surprised me by asking, “Why are you turning them loose early?” I looked at the clock and said, “Class ends at 11:00 am today, and it’s 11:00 am.” He laughed and said, “OK.”

He told me later that when I had been in the back room, the kids had taken the wall clock off the wall and turned it 5 minutes fast, so when it read 11:00 it was really 10:55. I thought it was a very funny prank and intended to congratulate the kids for being clever the next time I saw them. Being the beginning of a weekend, though, I forgot all about it until today when the kids asked to be let our early and I went over to the clock to see how much time I’d be giving up. I began to laugh, then turned to them and said, “That reminds me . . . “ whereupon, knowing where I was going with the thought, they all began to laugh. It was one of those spontaneous bits of amusement that I love.

And for the record, after telling them I knew what they had done, I told them I thought it was a very clever prank.

*Entry 45:* (4/21//2026) One of the quotes from the Brothers in the autobiography was:

I walk along and I set aside a stone that might be uncomfortable for someone. I pick up a fallen thing. I bring along with me a light of regard for all that I see, and I see the beauty and wonderful splendor that exists in all things. I ask of my High Mind that I should be able to put that harmony into my hand so that all the Consciousnesses of nature, when they feel me coming, will smile.

I have been taking a lot of walks of late, and when I find a large pebble in my path, I scoot it out of the way and onto the siding by giving it a small kick. What I’ve noticed is that when I do this, a tiny bit of anger rides on the kick (I talked about this earlier when recounting the kitchen episode). It is as though a small part of my self is put out that the rock is not where it belongs. This *reaction to the world around me* is not pronounced, but when I am just floating along, it is there. When I notice myself doing this, I correct my thinking and give the rock a blessing for doing its duty. I’m talking about this because it animates a very real difference in the way my small, self-involved self sometimes thinks and the way my higher-self thinks. I’m trying very hard to become awake to the point that my default thinking is that of the higher.

This reminds me some of when I was first starting out with the Brothers. I began to notice things that would appear very, very tiny to an outside observer, but that for me loomed large. It was a kind of sensitization of myself to myself. I am happy it’s starting up again. It certainly allows me to self-correct the little ways my child goes awry.

*Entry 46:* (4/23//2026) I was walking this afternoon and somehow got thinking about UFOs. I talked about them in the autobiography because the Brothers said something interesting about them. For those of you who haven’t read the autobiography, or who read it and don’t remember that part, in the early 1970s the Brothers said there are universes we don’t have access to because their “vibratory rate” is different from ours (physicists who deal with String Theory aren’t

coming from an eastern perspective, but they have concluded something similar—they call these structures Branes). The Brothers said that the UFOs we have been encountering have been manned by Beings from one of these “other universes” who have the technology needed to pop into ours and see what we are up to. They have come out of curiosity. What I didn’t say when writing about this was that the Brothers also said that although those Beings were way beyond us in a technological sense, they were nowhere close to us in a spiritual sense. Hard to believe we are “advanced” in a spiritual sense, but all things are evidently relative.

*Entry 47:* (4/24//2026) It is getting close to when I will be letting my autobiography out, and I’ve been feeling lately a little uncomfortable about it. I can very clearly see that some who read the book are going to come away thinking that I wrote it as an aggrandizement. That’s not it. I didn’t write the book because I want people to know I had some small contact with the Brothers, I wrote it because I want people to know that the Brothers exist, and that this place is not what it appears.

*Entry 48:* (5/6//2026) I have been having problems with my right shoulder. After eight months of just dealing with it (the problem is intermittent, so it isn’t easily diagnosed) I decided to go see Dr. Panosian, the orthopedic surgeon who operated on my knee and left shoulder and replaced by left hip. I was his kid’s physics teacher at Poly, so I had a fairly long history with him. Unfortunately, he had retired, but I went anyway and saw a Dr Tang.

While sitting in the waiting room, I did what I always try to do when in a doctor’s office, I projected as loving and comforting a thought as I could muster at all the individuals who were and would be in that room, and to the room itself. The waiting room in a doctor’s office has to be a place of distress (though an orthopedic problem is not like a cancer problem, so I assume the fear element is considerably less). Still, trying to saturate the wall of that place with a kindly thought always seems like a good idea. And as I sat there for four or five minutes in my tiny little meditation, a story the Brothers told came to mind (I recounted it in the autobiography).

It seems there was a beggar who sat every day in the same place on a side street in, as I remember, Bangalore, India. And as people would walk past him, whether they put a little something in his begging bowl or not, within fifty yards of passing him they would begin to feel more hopeful. It was as though someone had waved a magic wand and their load had been lightened.

The man was a chela. His task in life was to learn to radiate unconditional love, and he held that discipline day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year, decade after decade for his entire life. The path to enlightenment for the selfless Buddhas is not a short one.

*Entry 49:* (5/13//2026) There has been a lot in the news lately about the Supreme Court gutting the Voter’s Rights Act, and how southern states are now redistricting so as to eliminate primarily black Congressional districts. A black woman on the news who had been one of the first black children to go to as-before all white elementary school in the south said, “I now have the same feeling I had back then, and

it's not good." As I was listening to all of this, I imagined a conversation with one of the state representatives who is doing this redistricting. In it, I said, "You don't understand what you are doing to the black community, but that's OK because I believe in reincarnation, and next time around I suspect you will come back black, and then you will understand!"

A similar thing could be said of the climate change deniers who are making their stand because it is better for their business to do so. To them, I would say, "You don't understand what you are doing to the earth and climate. You don't seem to see and understand what the consequences of your selfish actions will be for your children and grandchildren and great grandchildren. But that's OK, because I believe in reincarnation, and I believe YOU will come back as one of those great grandchildren, and then you will understand."

It's interesting how perspective shapes our view of the world.\

*Entry 50:* (5/15//2026) I have been watching the TV show NCIS for years. It's mindless fun in the sense that I've gotten to know the characters, and the "mysteries" involved with each presentation are entertaining. Just a few weeks ago, they had a episode that had to be written by someone who has a very interesting view of life and death. (I am writing this considerably after the fact—I am kicking myself for not doing it when it was fresher in my mind.)

In the show, a corrupt government official and a "dirty" Army Criminal Investigation Division (CID) officer who is acting as a mole try to close down the NCIS unit. At some point, Director Vance defuses a bomb designed to get rid of evidence of the plot, and there is a shootout with the CID agent. The agent shoots Rocky Carroll's character (Director Leon Vance) in the chest before being himself killed. Fortunately, Vance is wearing a bullet-proof vest. A little later, another special agent arrives on Vance's doorstep and accuses the NCIS team of murdering the CID agent. Vance tries to save his unit by admitting to the shooting.

At the end of the episode, the special agent finally admits that he doesn't think the NCIS team had murdered the agent. During the scene, though, Vance is confused as to why things have gone down as they have. The special agent finally says something to the effect that he (Vance) hasn't been willing to let go, and at some point the agent transitioned from the character seen on the screen into the units old medical director, Dr Donald Ducky Mallard, who had died years previously. With that, Vance finally says, "I wasn't wearing a bullet-proof vest, was I?" Ducky says *no*, that he (Vance) had died as a consequence of the wounds, but that because he wasn't willing to let go of his responsibilities, he wasn't able to step across the line (my phrase) and move on.

I talk a lot in the autobio about what the Brothers said happens at death, and this ending did a spectacular job of publicly animating those ideas. You don't really change much when you step across the line. Who you are is who you are, and that doesn't change much with death. I was amazed to see the ideas presented on TV.

*Entry 51:* (5/17//2026) I've been listening to the New Yorker Radio Hour for the last several years, and today they had Jill Lepore, historian, writer for the New Yorker and university law professor, to talk about the country's 250 anniversary. Part of the presentation was in the form of asking people across the country what they thought about the country's birthday. People said all the things you would expect. One woman said she was proud of her country and our president. One guy said he appreciated being an American but thought our position on the world stage had diminished badly, that being an American didn't mean what it used to. One said he felt that none of the perks of being an American had been made available to him, so he appreciated his friends but wasn't really proud of being an American.

The last two people to talk were interesting beyond the norm, though, at least for me. The first said, "I applied for citizenship last year and am not just waiting for the oath ceremony. I have never felt anything but optimistic about become a U.S. citizen. But everything that is going on nationally makes me worried. I came here as a kid. I have always been here legally. I am an engineer. I have a master's degree. I am one of the lucky ones. If it is this challenging for me, I can't imagine how everybody else feels."

The other woman almost sounded Brothers-like. She said, "We seem to be going forward, then backward, then forward, then backward. But the way I think about going backward, think about a bow and arrow. In order for the arrow to go any length forward, it has to be pulled backward on the bow. There is tension in going backward, but then when you let it go it springs forward. I think that's possibly where we might be right now." That seemed like a remarkably optimistic way to look at the world.

*Entry 52:* (5/18//2026) I'm within a week of teaching my last class ever at Poly. I have been asked over the last few months what I will be doing with my retirement—how I will be filling up my time. With those questions, two things came to mind.

I talked about this in the autobiography, but during the early days with the Brothers when I was experiences pretty enormous leaps (at least for me) of insight into myself, I found that when I would talk to my mom and she'd ask what I was up to, I really had very little to say. Inner growth isn't something you can really talk about.

Switching gears: There is a state you sometimes hear Poly students allude to when talking about their life at Poly, called *the Poly bubble*. It is them acknowledging that they are to some degree sheltered and protected from the world through their association with the school.

Everyone lives in a bubble to some degree. When you walk down the street, what are you doing in your mind. Are you replaying the argument you just had with a spouse or friend or colleague? Do you have your nose stuck in a cell phone? Where is your brain as you walk? There is a very good chance it has you walled off into a very small space of self. This is not a bad thing. It is just the way people deal with the world.

I have been trying lately to expand my bubble. Paradoxically, it is an inward effort. That, I suspect, is what I will be doing after retirement, and consequentially, it looks as though I will have very little to talk to my friends about in the future.

*Entry 53:* (5/22//2026) I pretty much swore I wasn't going to talk about Trump anymore, but I do like a good *turn of phrase* and this week I ran into a beaut.

For those of you who don't know, Trump has gone a long way toward making America his piggybank. He has severely diminished the country internationally; he has all but neutered Congress; he has bludgeoned our democratic institutions; he has decimated our efforts to curb global warming. All of this seems to run along a common thread, that being that if he doesn't see profit for himself and his family in a proposition, he isn't interested in it.

That said, yesterday was a Friday which meant that Brookes and Capehart had their segment on the PBS NewsHour. The conversation was focused on Trump setting up what he called the Anti-weaponization Fund (nearly two billion dollars) to be given out to people (which is to say, Trump supporters) who feel they were the victim of political persecution by the Biden administration. (This fund has been nicknamed *the thug fund* as it may accept claims from the January 6 insurrectionists including those who were convicted of assaulting police officers on the 6<sup>th</sup>).

In the middle of the conversation, David Brooks, the conservative analyst, said, "Garrett Thompson, an independent journalist, mentioned *what happened this week?* Trump got out of a \$100,000,000 IRS fine, he got immunity from future tax investigations, there was this 1.8 billion dollar slush fund, there was insider trading that net a billion dollars, this was like the Coachella of political corruption, all in one week." Brooks went on to say, "You take a look at all that and I don't care who you are, if you have a shred of integrity, you have to wonder *what is going on here?* Walter Olson, who is a prominent legal analyst, said it was the biggest act of political corruption in his lifetime."

There were *turns of phrase* shot throughout this report (*the Coachella of political corruption . . . wow!*). I do love a good turn of phrase.